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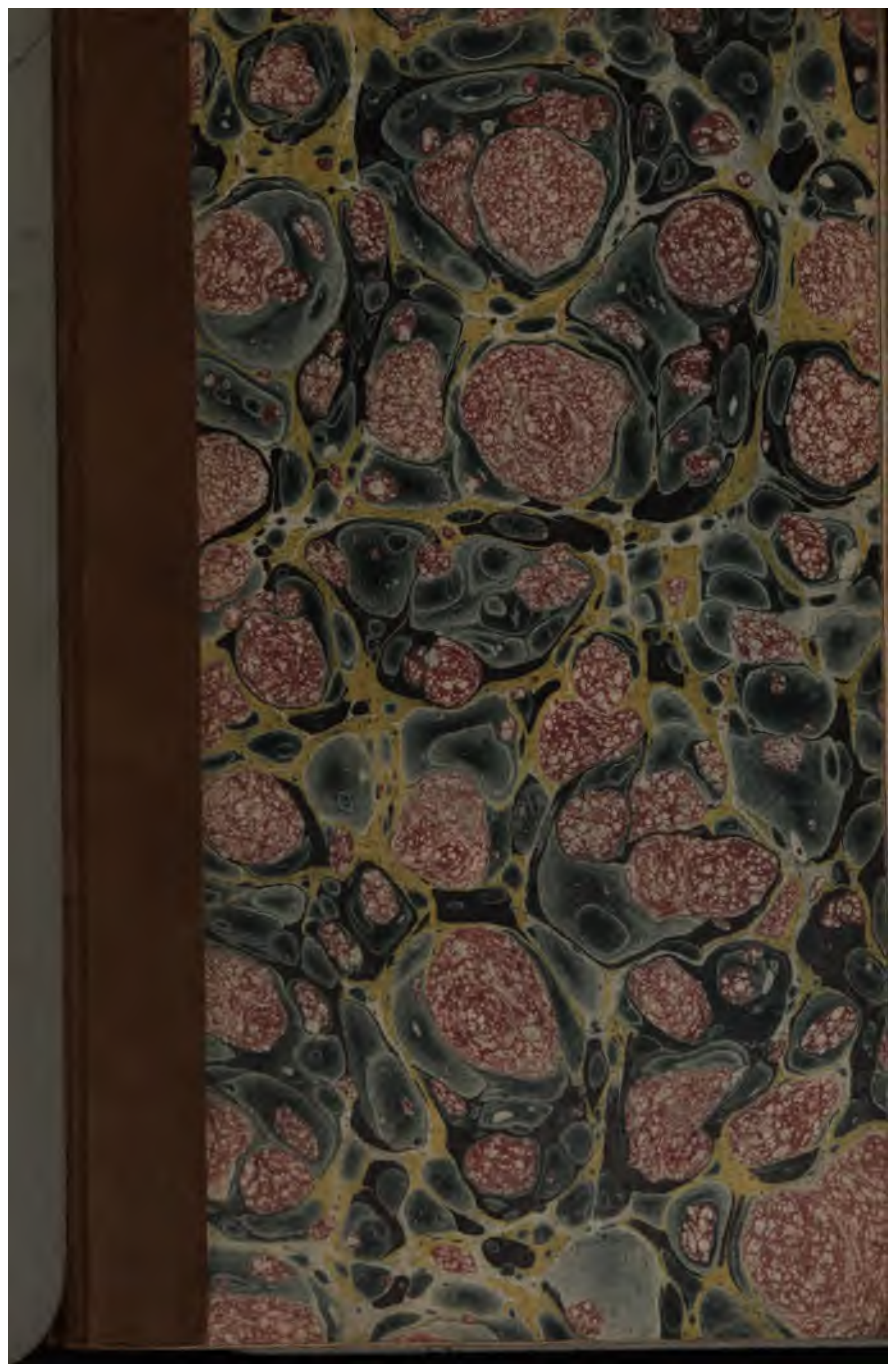
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THE  
CONFUSION  
OR  
THE WAG:  
A  
PLAY IN FIVE ACTS,



TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN  
OF  
KOTZEBUE.

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CAMBRIDGE:  
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M.DCCC.XLII.

496.



## P E R S O N S.

—ooo—

MR. VON LANGSALM, *a country Gentleman.*

MRS. VON LANGSALM, *his Wife.*

DORIS, *their Daughter.*

FRITZ HURLEBUSCH, *their Nephew and Ward.*

MAJOR VON LANGSALM.

BABET, *his Daughter.*

SELICOUR.

LAFLEUR, *Sclicour's Valet.*

MRS. KRICK, *a Housekeeper.*

WATCHMAN.

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*The scene is a Hall, with a middle door, and four side doors, in the mansion of Mr. Von Langsalm. The first on the left, is the chamber of the young ladies ; the second, that of Mr. Von Langsalm. The first door on the right the sleeping chamber of Mrs. Von Langsalm, the second the spare room. In the background there hangs over a chair a rain-cloak, near it an umbrella and a large garden-hat.*



# PREFACE,

BY THE TRANSLATOR.

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THE following Translation of one of Kotzebue's Plays, was the amusement of a few leisure hours, and was not, at the time it was written, intended for the Press. Subsequent circumstances, and the consideration of the very small number of the Dramatic writings of Kotzebue, which have been translated into the English language, have induced the Translator to offer it to the public.

The Translator feels it necessary to say thus much, because, amongst the very numerous writings of Kotzebue, there are to be found others, to which he would have given the preference, had he designedly translated for the press; these, he hopes, will at no distant day, meet with a far abler Translator than '*Der Wirrwarr*' has met with.

The present Translation, may, amongst the many faults and imperfections, which it undoubtedly possesses, at least lay claim to the merit of being a

faithful one ;—at the same time, the Translator has not been unmindful of the advice of Horace :—

“ Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere, fidus  
Interpres ; nec desilies imitator in arctum,  
Unde pedem proferre pudor vetet, aut operis lex.”

Kotzebue, the author, has styled this production, *Eine Posse, a Farce* ; the Translator has, notwithstanding, styled it, *a Play* ; since it appeared to him, not to be altogether unworthy of this somewhat higher title.

There are some exclamations, and expressions, interspersed throughout the original, which the Translator has ventured to omit ; and in so doing, whilst he has consulted his own, he trusts that he has consulted also, the taste of his English readers.

The Translator here begs to offer his thanks to Mr. Bernard, who did him the favor to peruse the translation when in manuscript, and to express his approval of it. The approval that it met with from this gentleman,—whose literary productions, and whose knowledge and skill in teaching, not only the German, but many other languages also, have gained for him a well-merited distinction,—was a still further inducement to the Translator to offer it to the public.

The Translator ventures to express the gratification he feels, at the increased attention which *is now* bestowed upon the study of the German

language. When the extent and celebrity of the literature of Germany are considered, some surprise must be felt that the study of its language has not been more extensively pursued. The reason for this, may perhaps be attributed to the preference which has been given to the cultivation of the French language in almost all the schools of Europe, and more particularly in our own, and to its general employment in diplomacy. It is to be hoped, however, that both of these languages will henceforth continue to be cultivated with that attention, which they merit from the other nations of Europe.

There might, indeed, be some ground for apprehension, that the general attention which state affairs attract among all classes in this country, would be unfavourable to the cause of literature, did we not feel assured, that a cause so important to the welfare of the nation, has the fairest chance of prosperity and success, under the protection of a Sovereign, who is no less a judge than a patron of literary merit, and of a Prince descended from a long line of illustrious ancestors, ever distinguished for an enlightened encouragement of literature, and whose example he has shewn himself desirous to follow.

With these few remarks "*Der Wirrwarr oder Der Muthwillige*" is sent forth to the public.

E. F. F.

CAMBRIDGE,  
December 16th, 1841.



# THE CONFUSION,

OR

## THE WAG.

---

### ACT I.

#### SCENE I.

[MR. VON LANGSALM, FRITZ HURLEBUSCH, and SELICOUR sit sideways upon Arm chairs, and sleep in comical positions, so that they knock their heads occasionally against each other. After a few minutes, MRS. VON LANGSALM, DORIS, and BABET enter.]

*Mrs. Von Langsalm.* I thought so indeed! there they all three sit and sleep.

*Doris.* Verily! And as it seems, quite in earnest. (*she calls within*) James! be quick and bring the tambourine.\*

*Mrs. V. Langs.* O your father never sleeps otherwise than in earnest. When he made me an offer of marriage, it might be about nine in the evening, he was so sleepy, that he could scarcely move his tongue; and on the evening of our wedding-day he actually fell asleep at supper.

*Dor.* A husband may be pardoned for falling asleep; it may sometimes even pass for gallantry; but is it not too bad, mamma, that *both* my lovers are asleep?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Two lovers? One half of them would be too many.

\* German, *Stalltrommel*—literally, a stable drum, but the translator is not aware of any instrument which is known by that name in England.

*Dor.* Ah! Too few by a dozen. On every finger a ring, and for every finger a lover, this is now the fashion in town.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* A very charming fashion, I have nothing to say against it; but I advise you to be prudent. (*low.*) You know, that your whole fortune depends upon your marrying your wild cousin Hurlebusch.

*Dor.* Or rather his half million.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* It is all the same.

*Dor.* Well, he cannot altogether escape me. The will of his father expressly commands, that he must lay at the feet of his amiable cousin, either his hand and heart, or a third of his fortune.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Very well; but the whole is better than a third. By that means too we shall avoid disagreeable guardianship accounts. And in short, it is quite time, to settle the matter, for between ourselves, your cousin will be of age to-morrow. Still to be sure he knows nothing of it. We have made him believe, he is a year younger. But how easily can an accident—You perceive, it is necessary, to bestow your attention for the present solely upon him; and it would have been better, if you had left the agreeable Selicour in town.

*Dor.* Must I die then of ennui in the country?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Girl, a lady must either accomplish her undertaking, however difficult it is, or sacrifice her life in the attempt.

*Dor.* Besides, my cousin is still so rough and clownish, that one could make him believe, Cupid is a gingerbread man.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Trust him not! His pedantic tutor, whom the last whim of his father appointed him, has filled his head with absurd things.

*Dor.* Airy mists, which the sunbeams of my eyes will easily dispel. (*A servant brings the Tambourine.*) Ah, there is the tambourine! Now will we beat alarming notes, that shall be heard by the whole village. (*She places the tambourine behind the sleepers, and beats a short tune. All three awake.*)

*Sel.* What was that?

*Langs.* I was just dreaming, that it thundered.

*Fritz.* (*looking about him.*) Jupiter is behind us.

*Sel.* (*springing up.*) I beg a thousand pardons.

*Dor.* (*mockingly.*) Your obedient servant.

*Langs.* (*Perceiving his wife.*) Ah, is it you my treasure? probably you have quarrelled with the servant?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Foolish nonsense! have I then a voice like our tambourine?

*Langs.* Was it our tambourine? Heigh-ho, what mistakes may not one make.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* You were born for mistakes.

*Dor.* That papa should take his nap, is nothing new. That cousin Hurlebusch fell asleep, was very good, for in the meantime, he could play his waggish tricks only in his dreams. But that you too, my gallant sir, whom I merely brought with me from town, in order to help me to pass away my time in the tedious country—

*Sel.* Your form fluttered around me even in my slumber.

*Dor.* But this must not be! You must flutter around me, Mr. Butterfly.

*Sel.* Very willingly, Lady Rose.

*Dor.* Come with me to my harpsicord. I wish to sing a duet. Cousin, kiss my hand.

*Fritz.* For what, because you have put mustard into my soup to-day?

*Dor.* Why not? Every thing which men enjoy, must women season, but surely not always with sugar, for that too easily sets the teeth on edge.

*(She takes SELICOUR's arm and goes with him into the next room.)*

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SCENE II.

THE FORMER without DORIS and SELICOUR. BABET stands in the background and knits, FRITZ looks archly at her.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Only tell me, husband, how you can always be sleeping?

*Langs.* Only tell me, my treasure, how you can always keep awake?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* The last trumpet will one day find you still sleeping.

*Langs.* As long as you live, my treasure, I shall need no trumpet.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* If it was not for me, the household would be ruined.

*Langs.* The philosopher sleeps also amidst ruins.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Ah, my dear husband! persons like you, who possess not a single passion, may easily be philosophers.

*Langs.* I possess no passion? Have you then forgotten, that forty years ago I fell in love with you?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Ha! ha! ha! you resemble the Aloe, you blossom only *once* in a hundred years.

*Langs.* Well my treasure, your blossoming time is also past.

*Fritz.* But my gracious aunt has produced a fruit—

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*Friendly.*) Which you, you rogue, ought to pluck.

*Fritz.* (*Aside.*) If it was not worm-eaten.

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### SCENE III.

MRS. KRICK. THE FORMER.

*Mrs. Krick.* The peasant Hartmann has called.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* What does he want?

*Fritz.* Ah, I know already, he brings you a fat calf.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* The honest man!

*Mrs. Krick.* By no means, he comes to offer his thanks.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* His thanks? For what?

*Fritz.* For the honor, which you do him, in accepting his present.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* I do not despise the gifts of poor people.

*Mrs. Krick.* But the question here, is not about a calf, but a cow.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* A cow indeed?

*Fritz.* Mrs. Krick only wishes thus to point out the size of the calf.

*Mrs. Krick.* Nay sir, endeavour to evade it, as you will, it must still come out.

*Fritz.* Nay, Mrs. Krick, it must come in.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* What then?

*Fritz.* The calf in the stall.

*Mrs. Krick.* To the deuce with your calf! The peasant Hartmann's only cow died yesterday. His wife was crying. The young gentleman then went secretly in the morning to the

house, and has sent thither by his servant Peter the best cow from your stall.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* How cousin! I will not hope—

*Fritz.* That Mrs. Krick has lied? Oh, no.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* What? My best cow?!

*Fritz.* Your *best*, but not your *only one*. The poor fellow indeed had lost his *only one*.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* He must give it up!

*Fritz.* I will pay for it.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* It was a Dutch cow.

*Fritz.* I will pay for it with Dutch ducats.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* She gave daily eight quarts of milk.

*Fritz.* (*Slily.*) Well now, dear aunt, we will bake at my wedding a few cakes less.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*Softened.*) At your wedding? You are yet making no preparations?

*Fritz.* That will be a sudden affair.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Your pedantic tutor, who quitted this world just at the right time, has built up all sorts of systems in your head—

*Fritz.* Love is like an earthquake, it overthrows such buildings.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* If at length you are in earnest, cousin, then I will pardon this time your roguishness, and go and receive graciously the thanks of the peasant. But disappoint my hopes no longer! Remember my daughter and your father's will. (*To BABET, who has been sitting the whole time in the background and knitting.*) Well niece? have you nothing more necessary to do? [*Exit with Mrs. KRICK.*]

## SCENE IV.

FRITZ, BABET, and MR. V. LANGSALM, *who is again asleep.*

*Bab. (Steps sighing to the table and rinses the cups.)*

*Fritz. (After a pause.)* Can then my dear little cousin take in hand no nobler employment?

*Bab.* How can you ask; must I not every day rinse the cups?

*Fritz.* Only break them in pieces now and then, and you will soon be relieved of your office.

*Bab.* Break them? I should then be obliged immediately to run out of the house.

*Fritz.* Well, the world is large, and you would easily find it better than in this house.

*Bab.* You may well speak thus. Your father has left you half a million. Mine has nothing but his sword, and I eat here the bread of charity.

*Fritz.* Salted and over-salted by my aunt. Have you not again a note to send to papa?

*Bab.* Ah yes, dear cousin! here is one. If you would be so good—

*Fritz.* I will be so good. Only give it me.

*Bab.* But the postage—

*Fritz.* I will again advance it. If you shall ever marry a rich man, I will bring my account.—Is this letter also full of heart-breaking complaints?

*Bab.* Ah yes!

*Fritz.* Poor child! your youth bears no roses.

*Bab.* Nor yet nettles only. I have many little enjoy-

ments, which I value the more, since some kind person secretly provides them for me, without wishing to be thanked for it.

*Fritz.* Indeed?

*Bab.* Yes, only think, even last night has some one hung before my window a cage with a nightingale.

*Fritz.* What an adventurer! before a garret window! He must be able to climb, like a cat.

*Bab.* You know the gloomy arbour in the park, where I am so fond of sitting? There around my seat of turf I lately found my favourite flowers planted.

*Fritz.* How gallant.

*Bab.* Still more. A few days ago an old woman came to me from the town, to thank me for two Louis-d'or, by which she supposed that I had relieved her distress.

*Fritz.* Well well? My little cousin is then not so poor, as she pretends to be.

*Bab.* Are you mocking me? I have not a farthing. A man wrapt in a cloak brought her the money in my name.

*Fritz.* A very singular fellow.

*Bab.* A generous man he must be.

*Fritz.* Probably a lover.

*Bab.* That I know not, but I think, I can guess him.

*Fritz.* Perhaps the son of the bailiff? he composes verses too.

*Bab.* No, no, you, cousin, you are the person.

*Fritz.* I? surely not indeed! would I risk the breaking of my arms and legs, in order to hang a nightingale before your window? would I plant flowers, which I cannot bear? and money moreover I have none at all. Notwithstanding my half-million my aunt keeps me very short.

*Bab.* Do you despise my thanks ?

*Fritz.* Dear little cousin, you must permit me to say : a lover only could act thus ; and surely you do not believe, that I am in love with you ?

*Bab.* (*smiling.*) Why not ? a little.

*Fritz.* Heaven forbid ! in confidence, you have a host of faults.

*Bab.* Of that I am aware.

*Fritz.* You are so shy, so timid—

*Bab.* Like poverty.

*Fritz.* You understand not how to dress yourself in the Greek style.

*Bab.* My toilet is in the kitchen.

*Fritz.* You are as reserved as a nun.

*Bab.* My heart is unreserved.

*Fritz.* You use no paint.

*Bab.* The morning red paints me daily.

*Fritz.* You compose no verses.

*Bab.* I read Schiller.

*Fritz.* You blush not at ambiguities.

*Bab.* Because I understand them not.

*Fritz.* You are not at all a *coquette*.

*Bab.* Do you wish that I should be ?

*Fritz.* You are no freethinker ; never mock at prejudices ; never make yourself merry at the expence of old age ; you do not even understand how to speak ill of people.

*Bab.* Cousin, if you were in earnest, I should cease to like you.

*Fritz.* Do you like me then ?

*Bab.* O yes, with all my heart. You are the only person in the house, who, with the exception of everlasting raillery, uses me not ill.

*Fritz.* And yet you would not kiss me yesterday evening ?

*Bab.* Do you measure friendship by kisses ?

*Fritz.* To be sure. A true Nile-measurer. The more kisses, the higher the flood rises, the more fruitful the country. Kiss me now.

*Bab.* No.

*Fritz.* I entreat.

*Bab.* It will not avail you.

*Fritz.* I will threaten.

*Bab.* Ha ! ha ! ha !

*Fritz.* I will use force.

*Bab.* Take care of yourself ! I will christen you with the rinsing bowl.

*Fritz.* This we will yet see.

*He kisses her by force upon her cheek. At this moment LANGSALM snores very loud. BABET frightened, screams, and drops a cup, which she had just then in her hand.*

*Bab.* Ah ! for heaven's sake ! I have broken my aunt's favourite cup.

*Fritz.* Broken ? ha ! ha ! ha ! *nulle fête sans verre cassé.*

*Bab.* It was your fault.

*Fritz.* Not at all. Why did you play the prude ?

*Bab.* What must I do now ?

*Fritz.* Calmly await the storm.

*Bab.* Alas ! she will scold me ! I really believe, I already hear her pantoufles on the steps.

*Fritz.* Only be silent ! This time I will help you out of the scrape.

*(He puts the greatest piece of the broken cup into the*

*hand of the sleeping LANGSALM, and lays the other fragments near him.)*

*Bab.* What are you about?

*Fritz.* There, now she may come. This will make some sport! (*He calls at the door.*) Aunt! aunt! your favourite cup is broken!

*Bab.* Cousin! are you mad?

*Fritz.* Aunt! come! your favourite cup is broken in a thousand pieces!

*Bab.* Abominable man!

---

## SCENE V.

MRS. V. LANGSALM. THE FORMER.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*rushing in.*) What? my favourite cup? who? how? where?

*Fritz.* There, only look! my uncle asks for some more coffee, my cousin pours out some for him, he drinks, falls asleep, and slap! there lies the cup.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*shaking her husband.*) Husband! accursed husband!

*Langs.* (*opens his eyes.*) My treasure?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* What foolish tricks have you been again playing?

*Langs.* I have been asleep, and in sleep one can do nothing wrong?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Only be good enough to glance at your hand.

*Langs.* A piece of a broken cup? What does this mean?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Yes, a piece of a broken cup; and there

at your feet lie a dozen other pieces. I wish, that you yourself had been broken into a thousand pieces.

*Langs.* Indeed, my treasure, I know nothing about it.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* You have been drinking coffee!

*Langs.* Coffee, well?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* And have fallen asleep over it.

*Langs.* That is possible.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* You have broken my own cup.

*Langs.* I am sorry for it, my treasure.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* For twenty years have I drank out of it.

*Langs.* I will buy you another.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* It was a present from the young lieutenant, who once was quartered upon us.

*Langs.* From him? well? now you surely possess other remembrances of him.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (to *Babet*.) And you! why must you just give my cup to this everlasting sleeper?

*Bab.* Because—

*Fritz.* Quite naturally, because it had just been washed.

*Bab.* Yes, I had just cleaned it.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Away, into the kitchen, you miserable child!  
[*Exit Babet.*]

## SCENE VI.

### THE FORMER *without* BABET.

*Langs.* I cannot recollect however, that I have been drinking coffee.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* You will sleep so long, until you forget, that you are married.

*Langs.* (*with a deep sigh.*) Ah my treasure! I shall not forget that.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Arouse yourself, husband! we have to speak of serious matters with our cousin.

*Langs.* With our cousin?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* To be sure. My daughter has already been back from town four weeks, and cousin Hurlebusch has not yet declared himself.

*Langs.* Must I be present, when he declares himself?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* That is not at all necessary. You shall be called when it comes to the blessing.

*Langs.* What am I to do then?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* To call him to account, why he delays the matter?

*Langs.* (*very phlegmatick.*) Well cousin, I do call you to account.

*Fritz.* Bashfulness, dear aunt, nothing but accursed bashfulness.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* This used not to be your fault. And in short, you know that the will of your father expressly commands your marriage with my daughter.

*Fritz.* Yes, yes, you have told me this so very often.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* If you make any objection, you will lose a third of your fortune.

*Fritz.* Quite right.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* The will is in my custody.

*Fritz.* (*aside.*) She has taken better care of that than of her daughter.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* You are now grown up, and will sometime hence be of age—

*Langs.* I think tomorrow, my treasure?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* If you would but not meddle with  
ing. Who must know best? You or I?

*Langs.* You my angel, to be sure.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (to *Fritz*.) Consequently it is  
fulfil the wish of your dying father.

*Fritz.* I must however first make a little court  
cousin.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* That you can do after the wedding

*Fritz.* What are you thinking of? surely that would  
the world turned upside down.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* You cannot think, dear cousin, what  
the matrimonial state possesses! The matrimonial state  
cousin—

*Langs.* (his eyes stretched towards the ceiling.)  
woeful state!

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Foolish nonsense!

*Langs.* It is only a saying.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Make amends upon the spot for  
stupid fancy; paint for him the charms of matrimony.

*Langs.* I, my treasure?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Yes, you! I expressly desire it.

*Langs.* I am not very well versed in painting.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Picture to him our domestic happiness  
the silent joys of our love.

*Langs.* It will be painful to me—I mean so  
speaking.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Without ceremony! or I will not  
you to close an eye for twenty-four hours.

*Langs.* If you absolutely command.—Matrimony,  
dear cousin—if one properly reflects upon matrimony  
seeks rightly to paint that same matrimony—(he yawn

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Best of all it might be compared with an everlasting spring-time—

*Langs.* In April.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* A wife is a true gift of heaven! beauty, tenderness, complaisance,—in short, a wife is—

*Langs.* Always right.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*throws at him a furious glance and then continues.*) In the hand of a wife, dear cousin, you wander upon flowers, upon roses—until one day at a late grave death—

*Langs.* Relieves you.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Husband, you are unbearable. Do not listen to him, cousin, he is as senseless as a sleeping badger; he will one day be suffocated in his fat. Come, come, you shall drive the fowls out of the garden.

*Langs.* Is this too one of the sweets of matrimony?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Yes, you must take exercise, and besides the fowls scrape all the seeds out of the ground. Away! away! (*she draws him from the chair*) And you, cousin, reflect upon the matter. My Doris seems not disinclined towards you, therefore the sooner you declare yourself the better.

*Langs.* As a wedding present I destine for you two dozen fowls.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* What is he to do with them?

*Langs.* Ah cousin! it will be some consolation to me, when I see, how *you* drive them out of *your* garden.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* I thought so! already again some nonsense! do you not perceive, that I cherish the most tender care for your health?

*Langs.* Yes, yes, my treasure, I am quite overcome by your tenderness. (*He is dragged out by his wife.*)

## SCENE VII.

FRITZ alone.

Poor Uncle! under *your* colours will Hymen make few Proselytes. (*some strokes upon the Harpsicord are heard in Doris's chamber.*) What is that? musick?—(*he peeps through the keyhole*) My town cousin will probably display her musical knowledge.—(*Doris and Selicour sing behind the scenes the duet: "Frieden lasset uns stiften",\* but only half of it.*) Right! a duet from *Cosa Rara*.—Perhaps they have quarrelled.—I have a great desire to accompany them upon the Tambourine.

## SCENE VIII.

BABET and FRITZ.

*Bab.* [*Places the rest of the cups in a basket.*]

*Fritz.* Just in time, beautiful Babet! Here they are singing a duet. Suppose we make a quartet of it? "*Lasse Frieden uns stiften.*"\*

*Bab.* We surely have not quarrelled?

*Fritz.* "*Bist du mein Glück, meine Wonne*"†?

*Bab.* I pray you cousin, let me alone. I am not at all in a singing humour. My Aunt has just been singing a song to me which still rings in my ears.

*Fritz.* What Aunt! My Aunt is discordance personified. But I, with the pure harmony of my heart—

*Bab.* Tell this to your intended Bride.

\* "Let us make peace."

† "Art thou my happiness, my joy?"

*Fritz.* My intended bride? do you know my intended  
ide?

*Bab.* Strange question.

*Fritz.* You surely do not mean cousin Doris?

*Bab.* Whom else?

*Fritz.* Mistaken notion!

*Bab.* A third of your fortune lies at stake.

*Fritz.* And my heart.

*Bab.* Have you already ever made the discovery, that  
ou have a heart?

*Fritz.* A malicious question. Suppose I now confess to  
ou, that I am in love, as no Hurlebusch has ever yet been;  
o much in love, that I, like a second Don Quixote, lately  
nistook our parson in the pulpit for a Windmill.

*Bab.* Then I pity you.

*Fritz.* Do you wish to know the object of my Love?

*Bab.* The object of your Folly.

*Fritz.* It is a beautiful maiden.

*Bab.* So every lover thinks of his own.

*Fritz.* You shall judge for yourself. I can shew you her  
portrait.

*Bab.* Her portrait?

*Fritz.* Yes, yes, do you wish to see it?

*Bab.* Well, I am rather curious.

*Fritz.* (*Turns her round quickly. She was standing  
with her back towards the mirror, and now stands facing  
it.*) There! There! Quite the original. (*he runs away.*)

*Bab.* Does he mean me? (*with cast-down eyes*) poor  
Babet!—(*she looks up joyfully*) He means me!—Happy  
Babet! (*she goes away with the basket.*)

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

## ACT II.

## SCENE I.

[MR. V. LANGSALM, *quite in a perspiration and out of breath, under each arm a great bandbox with womens' finery.*]

Oh!—Oh!—I am killed!—(*he totters towards his arm-chair*)—The Fowls—the cursed Fowls!—and scarcely am I free from them, when satan conducts hither a messenger from the town, laden as a mule with womens' finery! which I must drag up the steps! I, who am scarcely able to drag up myself!—To be sure it is not heavy—light, very light, as the whole sex, for which it has been prepared;—but—must one not stretch out the arms, as upon the rack?—(*he drops both the boxes*) Lie there! Idol of the Ladies! mine is repose!—(*he sinks comfortably in the chair.*) Ah!—the fowls! the execrable fowls!—would that they all had but one neck—so that the cook might with one cut of it despatch them from the world.—There was a turkey cock in particular, with cursed long legs—when I thought, I had driven it away from the peas, quickly it sat upon the beans—and at last it springs upon the melon-bed, stretches its blue-red nose towards me and screams caawl caawl caawl!—with great pains I drive the beast out at the great gate—what happens? cousin Hurlebusch lets it in again at the little gate.—Ah! if every one longing for matrimony would but provide himself beforehand with a few stout Martens, which would keep his henroost a little in order—And my keeper—I will dismiss him from my service, if he dares,

again to shoot a hawk—(*he puts himself to rights*) A stupid chair, not at all comfortable—One knows not, where to place the head.—I admire the old fashioned chairs with the great cushioned ears—yes, yes, so it is with the world! every day fewer chair-ears and more asses-ears.—No, I cannot lie thus. I must again indulge myself after the severe fatigue.—To bring a pillow from the Bed-Room? that is too far.—Is there nothing at all at hand?—the Boxes? (*he takes the least, and tries to shove it under his head.*) That is much too stiff—and smells of Bookbinder's paste.—Perhaps the contents are softer. (*He opens it and draws out a cap*) Right, there is an abundance of baggage—Gauze, Lace, and things of that sort—this may be tried—(*he shoves it under his head, and tries it every way; the cap comes at last to sit upon his head.*) That will do—one must be content—The piper plays easily, when the dancers are willing—(*He goes to sleep.*)

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## SCENE II.

MRS. V. LANGSALM.    MR. V. LANGSALM.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Now, my treasure, we will see, whether the milliner—(*she perceives the cap.*) What!—I really believe, he has used my new dress cap for a night-cap!—Mr. Von Langsalm! (*she shakes him,*) Mr. Timotheus Sebastian Von Langsalm!

*Langs.* (*awaking.*) What is the matter again already?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* What is the matter? I am choked with rage!

*Langs.* Is the execrable turkey-cock again in the garden?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* I wish it had scratched out both your eyes.

*Langs.* My treasure, I do, what I can, but I am not able to catch the long-legged devil.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*almost breathless.*) What have you there upon your head?

*Langs.* Upon my head? (*he takes the cap off, smiling.*) Ah yes!

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Is that a night-cap?

*Langs.* No, this is a dress cap.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* A cap, which I have ordered, for the purpose of appearing in on my daughter's betrothal day.\*

*Langs.* Very well, there it is; I shall not put it on.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* But am I to put it on, after it has been bent and crushed by you in the most cruel manner?

*Langs.* (*Whilst he puts the cap to rights in a clumsy manner.*) There it is, set to rights. Womens' finery, and womens' hearts, although they may be a little rumped, come easily again into the old form.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* If you would but not attempt to be witty into the bargain. An elephant must not attempt to dance. Give me the cap! (*she snatches it away.*) It is indeed mere luck, that the man has not hit upon the lace veil in the other box; he would have been ready to make garters of it.

*Langs.* A lace veil? How many bushels of corn were sent into town for that?

\* In Germany the ceremony of betrothal precedes that of marriage, and the day on which such ceremony takes place is celebrated by festivity.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Foolish question! our Doris has wished for such a one long ago. Cousin Hurlebusch must make her a present of this, when he declares to her his love.

*Langs.* Well well. Does he love her then?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* That I know not. As to that he may do as he pleases. But he *must say* so, and he *must marry* her.

*Langs.* By all means!

*Mrs. V. Langs.* I wish, that the matter should be settled to day, for to-morrow he will be of age, and then he can easily take leaps.

*Langs.* But the leap into matrimony is indeed a very dangerous leap.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Have you ever broken your neck by it?

*Langs.* Broken it, no, but strongly bent it.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* And very properly so! If *we* did not constantly keep you under the yoke, what would happen? To engage in metaphysical cavillings; to calculate the return of a comet; to square the circle; this, to be sure, you men understand! but to take only one step in the great world, without stumbling, of this you would be incapable, if the women did not always keep you in leading strings.

*Langs.* Well well.—But would it not be better, my treasure, that we should inform our cousin, that to-morrow our guardianship will be at an end?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Inform him? To what purpose?

*Langs.* In order that it may not appear, as though we had persuaded, or compelled him to the choice.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Here it is! Are not you the head of the family?

*Langs.* The head? Certainly.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* And is not cousin Hurlebusch a member of the family ?

*Langs.* A member, indeed.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Well, consequently. The head commands, the members obey ; for the head is the seat of reason, and reason am I.

*Langs.* You are.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Then no further objections ! stand up, carry the boxes ; we will unpack the veil in my room and deliberate upon the rest.

*Langs.* Could I not remain here a little longer ?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Why ?

*Langs.* On account of the turkey cock I need some rest.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Fudge ! Have you nothing to do ?

*Langs.* Not that I know of.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Is the receipt for the almond tart copied ?

*Langs.* Not yet.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Is the cotton for the canary birds pulled ?

*Langs.* Not yet either.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* And my sick pug dog—

*Langs.* Ah yes, he must be brought out into the sun. Then I must indeed——(*he raises himself painfully.*)

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*pushes the boxes under his arm.*) Away ! away ! there is no time to lose.

*Langs.* (*whilst he is dragged away by her.*) The pug dog indeed is a happy beast, although he is ill. He is carried. I must always *walk*, always *walk*—until they will one day carry me to the grave.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Then you can sleep.

*Langs.* Ah yes, then I will sleep to satisfaction.

[*Exeunt ambo.*]

SCENE III.

[SELICOUR *springs out of* DORIS's chamber *with a pocket-book in his hand.* DORIS *runs in after him.*]

*Doris.* Selicour! I tell you, I shall be angry.

*Sel.* So much the better! it is a thing unheard of, that we should have been in love with one another for two months, without having quarrelled quite according to order.

*Dor.* Give me my pocket-book.

*Sel.* Not until I have glanced over the contents.

*Dor.* There are letters in it.

*Sel.* *Billets-doux?*

*Dor.* That matters not to you.

*Sel.* If they are more than two months old, no; but Heaven preserve you, if I find one of later date.

*Dor.* You shall find nothing at all. Give it me!

*Sel.* Truce! stop! I propose a peace,

*Dor.* First give up the conquest! I insist upon the *status quo*.

*Sel.* I will negotiate. We will make an exchange. There is *my* pocket-book.

*Dor.* What am I to do with it?

*Sel.* O I assure you, that it is just as fruitful as your own.

*Dor.* At any rate I can agree to the exchange.

*Sel.* There take it, and then we will see, what we can give up to each other.

*Dor.* (*takes it,*) You are an arrant villain.

*Sel.* (*turns over the leaves.*) From Mr. Gentleman of the Bed-chamber Frog? Ay, ay!

*Dor.* (*turns over the leaves.*) From Mrs. Finch? See there.

*Sel.* I give up to you the Finch.

*Dor.* Keep the Frog.

*Sel.* From Captain Bullock? He is a coarse fellow, with whom I may have nothing to do.

*Dor.* From Miss Moonshine? Four full sides? O that is tedious.

*Sel.* From the blind Mr. Beak with the long dry fingers! well of *this* conquest you need not be proud.

*Dor.* From Mrs. Blond the wife of the counsellor of Finances, who for forty years has remained in her thirtieth! ha! ha! ha! that is not of much consequence.

*Sel.* From the Land Steward——

*Dor.* (*Snatches her pocket-book away from him, and gives his back.*) Enough! enough! Every one his own. You see, that half the metropolis swarms in my pocket-book.

*Sel.* And the other half in mine.

*Dor.* It is true, dear Selicour, we seem to be quite made for each other.

*Sel.* Two souls like ours must meet.

*Dor.* I promise you fidelity for another half-year.

*Sel.* What heroism!—but I love you also with a *fureur*—Would you believe, that I once was about to commit the folly of offering you my hand?

*Dor.* Are you mad?

*Sel.* Fortunately my reason interposed just at the right time——

*Dor.* Like a ghost.

*Sel.* Our intercourse will be far more interesting, far more piquant, if you marry the young bear, who grew up here in the forests. The wild beast possesses half-a-million cash, and his stupidity is worth half-a-million more. That will be a life !

*Dor.* You are right. Our family is poor. His mother, my deceased aunt, married a rich miser, who was so wise, as to make me his heiress. To be sure I must take the young dolt with me into the bargain ; but in return I shall keep the first house in the metropolis.

*Sel.* I shall arrange the *fêtes*.

*Dor.* My husband shall write the invitations.

*Sel.* I shall walk with you upon the promenade—

*Dor.* You shall accompany me to the opera—

*Sel.* We will criticize—

*Dor.* And patronize too.

*Sel.* We will invite one day in the week poor poets to dinner.

*Dor.* Who shall make verses for us—

*Sel.* Upon your husband.

*Dor.* Quite right, upon my husband, ha ! ha ! ha !

*Sel.* *Bouts-rimés*, ha ! ha ! ha !

*Dor.* All very good, if we are not counting the chickens before they are hatched ; for my marble cousin is as yet blind to my charms. I think, he is afraid of you.

*Sel.* I had scarcely given him credit for so much sense.

*Dor.* Seriously, Selicour, it would be well, if until after the wedding you went to work a little more prudently.

*Sel.* *Vis à vis* to such eyes, a difficult task.

*Dor.* Appear, as though you were making court to my fair insipid cousin.

*Sel.* You impose a hard trial upon me.

*Dor.* I wish it, I command it.

*Sel.* And the reward?

*Dor.* A smiling future.

*Sel.* I am a great friend of the present, and if I am to impose upon myself the constraint, of doing homage to the melting Babet, then must you at least pay me beforehand with a kiss.

*Dor.* Paying beforehand is gone out of fashion.

*Sel.* But not stealing. (*He kisses her quickly upon the cheek.*)

*Dor.* Impudent man! there you have now kissed away the paint from my cheek. (*She steps before the mirror.*) Really, the structure of the hair too is undermined. Is it worth the trouble, to make my toilet once more on your account? (*She goes into her chamber.*)

#### SCENE IV.

*SELICOUR alone.*

AM I at last rid of her?—ha! ha! ha! she herself wishes, I should appear to be in love with Babet?—An excellent idea!—Indeed I should soon perform my part but too naturally for her. Such a charming novice, such interesting languishing—I feel, that I could love Babet four weeks longer than usual.

## SCENE V.

FRITZ and SELICOUR.

*Sel.* Very right, my dear Hurlebusch.

*Fritz.* Very wrong.

*Sel.* I want a confidant.

*Fritz.* I do not.

*Sel.* So much the better, then you can bestow upon me your whole attention.

*Fritz.* Very well. I bestow right willingly upon poor people.

*Sel.* (*Aside.*) How stupid! (*loud.*) You must know, that I love your cousin Babet.

*Fritz.* Indeed? I love her also.

*Sel.* Cousin's love, lukewarm water. Mine is a burning spirit.

*Fritz.* Theatrical flame.

*Sel.* Will you assist me? be my *postillon d' amour*?

*Fritz.* (*Aside.*) Stay! I will punish you.

*Sel.* Well? no answer?

*Fritz.* Do you wish to marry Babet?

*Sel.* Time will shew that.

*Fritz.* To be sure, to be sure. At first an intrigue?

*Sel.* You have hit it.

*Fritz.* Behind the backs of other honest people?

*Sel.* You have guessed it.

*Fritz.* A *rendezvous* in the twilight?

*Sel.* Charming.

*Fritz.* In case of need an elopement ?

*Sel.* That would be so much more romantic.

*Fritz.* Besides the poor girl is ill used here in house.

*Sel.* Then it would be meritorious, to carry her off.

*Fritz.* Agreed ! I will arrange that.

*Sel.* *Mon cher Ami*, give me your hand !

*Fritz.* Nonsense ! Between ourselves, I think, Bab already over head and ears in love with you.

*Sel.* Indeed ? do you think so ?

*Fritz.* How can you doubt it ?

*Sel.* You are right, I am sometimes so cursed mo But still—what proofs—

*Fritz.* She has a starling, which she has taught to nounce your name.

*Sel.* (*Delighted*) My name ? a starling ? My name ?

*Fritz.* It calls from morning to night : Selicour ! cour !

*Sel.* Selicour ! Selicour !

*Fritz.* When she bought it, it understood nothing else ! Rogue ! Rogue ! this indeed is sometimes mixed with it still.—Hush ! I hear her coming. Only commence the m well, and for the rest rely upon me.—I will go a little on side, else she may be bashful before me.

*Sel.* Go, go, I am armed with the arms of Love.

*Fritz.* (*aside*) I will be cursed, if I do not put a and bells upon you, (*he pretends to be going, but creeps hind the sofa.*)

*Sel.* Now will any one tell me again, that we can n no use of foolish people. A clever head knows how to fire out of wood.

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## SCENE VI.

BABET, *who goes across the stage with some flax.*

THE FORMER. DORIS *at the door.*

*Sel.* Whither so quickly, my beautiful child?

*Bab.* I must place the flax about my distaff.

*Sel.* O remain here, to spin my thread of life.

*Bab.* (*smiling.*) Sir, I am no fate.

*Sel.* But still one of the celestials!

*Bab.* To be sure the smoke from my kitchen ascends to Olympus!

*Sel.* O! were I Jupiter! I would stretch out my godlike nose only to this smoke!

*Bab.* Even without being Jupiter, all my smoke is at your service. (*She makes a courtesy, and is about to go away.*)

*Sel.* (*detains her.*) Daphne wishes to fly, but Apollo holds her back!

*Bab.* Do not expect however, Mr. Apollo, to see me for your sake changed into wood.

*Sel.* Alas you have been already changed into stone.

*Bab.* Let me alone, sir! your whole mythology will not spin one single thread from my distaff.

*Sel.* Are these rosy fingers made for such work?

*Bab.* Spinning was in the olden time a very noble employment.

*Sel.* Loving is far nobler.

*Bab.* Not always.

*Sel.* But still when two hearts like ours meet ?

*Bab.* Wait, I will call my cousin.

*Sel.* Why ?

*Bab.* In order that your gallant apostrophe may be addressed to the right person.

*Sel.* You surely do not think, I am in love with my cousin ?

*Bab.* So it almost seems.

*Sel.* What bad taste do you attribute to me.

*Dor.* (*aside.*) What ?

*Bab.* Is not my cousin pretty then ?

*Sel.* Pretty ? O yes ; yet far less so than she is of herself.

*Bab.* Her black eyes—

*Sel.* Which coquet with everybody.

*Bab.* Her friendly smile—

*Sel.* A decoy for every one.

*Bab.* Her long silken hair—

*Sel.* Is false.

*Bab.* Her blooming cheek—

*Sel.* Is painted.

*Bab.* Her ever serene temper—

*Sel.* Without female delicacy.

*Bab.* Her interesting caprices—

*Sel.* As formerly Mrs. Honesta.\*

*Dor.* (*who has been scarcely able to restrain her.*)  
Stop, rogue !

*Sel.* In short, beautiful Babet, you are mistaken, I think, that I can love a person, who exhibits everywhere

\* Probably a character well known upon some of the stages of the Continent.

withered charms ; to whom no conquest is too trifling, and no means too little. Here at your feet, I swear—

*Dor.* (*gives him with her fan a hard rap upon the shoulder.*) That you are a fool ! an arrant fool ! (*goes into her chamber.*)

*Sel.* (*kneels stupified.*)

*Bab.* O woe, Mr. Jupiter ! your Juno has heard you.

*Fritz.* (*comes from behind the sofa, and throws himself at Babet's feet on the other side.*) And here, at your feet, I also swear—

*Bab.* Was this wild fellow also here ? Well then, swear eternal fidelity to each other ! (*she slips into Doris's chamber, and leaves both behind kneeling.*)

## SCENE VII.

SELICOUR and FRITZ.

[*Both look at each other for a few moments with comical features.*]

*Sel.* Mr. Von Hurlebusch—

*Fritz.* Mr. Von Selicour—

*Sel.* This was a cursed trick !

*Fritz.* She gave quite a corporal's blow.

*Sel.* Where were you then ?

*Fritz.* Behind the sofa.

*Sel.* Were you not aware of Doris's presence ?

*Fritz.* O yes.

*Sel.* Why did you not warn me then ?

*Fritz.* I could not be so uncourteous, as to interrupt you.

*Sel.* (*springs up.*) Go to the devil!

*Fritz.* (*also springs up.*) Rather to him, than to Mrs. Honesta.

*Sel.* Now we shall have three long days of complaints.

*Fritz.* What do you care about that? You carry off Babet, and laugh at the forsaken one in the arms of love.

*Sel.* Yes, if she loved me!

*Fritz.* Do you still doubt it?

*Sel.* She was so snappish.

*Fritz.* In order to conceal her charming modesty. Did you not observe, how pleased she was, when you disparaged Doris's beauty?

*Sel.* Every woman would gladly hear the same.

*Fritz.* But Babet's timid looks, her affected joke, her maidenly struggles—in short, sir, only keep your post chaise ready at midnight, and leave me to take care of the rest.

*Sel.* Agreed! I will undertake the adventure. To be sure, there is a storm gathering—

*Fritz.* So much the more romantic. And only consider, what a storm is gathering over your head here in the house.

*Sel.* You are right. I will hasten to the posting house. A horse for myself, and a light phaeton for my goddess. [*Exit.*]

*Fritz.* (*alone.*) Stay! I will pack in for you a goddess, who shall give you some trouble. But whom? Doris? or my Aunt? or Mrs. Krick, our old housekeeper?—All the same! whomsoever chance shall throw in my way.

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## SCENE VIII.

MRS. V. LANGSALM. FRITZ.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*with a black lace veil.*) Well cousin, there I have bought something for you.

*Fritz.* A veil? do you wish to make a nun of me?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Fool, you must present it to your future bride.

*Fritz.* To my future bride? with all my heart.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* In this manner you will most easily overcome your bashfulness. Such a costly present will smooth for you the way to Doris's heart.

*Fritz.* It will be easily smoothed.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Do you think so, rogue? Well then, call her here, and declare yourself in my presence.

*Fritz.* In your presence? No, dear aunt, that I cannot do. A love declaration must only take place under four eyes.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Well then go in. But still I may listen at the door?

*Fritz.* Yes—that indeed—but—

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Still a but?

*Fritz.* Babet is with her.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Send her away.—Do you know what? my monkey has escaped into the garden! there is a storm coming, the poor beast may get wet; tell Babet, she must go down immediately into the garden, to catch the monkey; that I have commanded it. In the meanwhile you will have time, to speak out.

*Fritz.* Very well. I will send Babet down by the back stairs, in order that she may suspect nothing.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Quite right, quite right.

(*Fritz goes into Doris's chamber.*)

(*alone.*) At length I have arrived at the summit of my wishes! He is to be sure still a young bear, but she will train him. My maternal lessons and a town life have not been in vain.

*Fritz.* (*comes.*) She is gone.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Then arm yourself with the veil; t courage! go in as my dear cousin, come out as my dear s

*Fritz.* (*takes the veil.*) Now I have courage. O remain quite close at the door; you shall yourself hear, I express my feelings. (*Goes into Doris's chamber.*)

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*opens quickly her husband's chamber door.*) Husband! Come here!

*Langs.* (*from within.*) Already again?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Make haste! make haste!

## SCENE IX.

MR. V. LANGSALM. MRS. V. LANGSALM.

*Langs.* My treasure, you know, that I am no lover haste, and that no one in the world is more wretched in opinion, than a courier, or a running footman.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Hush! we will listen, how our Hurlebusch declares himself to Doris.

*Langs.* Listen? Well, well, that is one of my agreeable occupations.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* That will remind us of our own coo ship.

*Langs.* Ah, yes!—can I also sit at it?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Why not? we will sit very tenderly near each other.

*Langs.* Very tenderly, ah yes! (*they sit down near Doris's door.*)

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*who sits nearest to it and listens,* hear sighing.

*Langs.* Well?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Do you not still remember, how you too sighed?

*Langs.* O yes, I am still sighing!

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*listening.*) Silence! Now the sighs become loud.

*Fritz.* (*from within.*) Dear good cousin! I come with the express consent of my aunt.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* The good boy! what respect he shews for me.

*Langs.* The whole house shews respect for you.

*Fritz.* (*from within.*) Already for a long time have I loved you in silence.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Just so did you also speak to me.

*Langs.* Did I do so? ay! ay!

*Fritz.* Decide upon the happiness of my life.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* As though I heard you, my dear husband.

*Langs.* Yes, yes, I was at that time a great flatterer.

*Fritz.* I know, that my wealth will not determine you, but my honest heart.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* I am eager, however, to hear Doris's answer.

*Langs.* She will answer as usual. The old story.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Fie, husband! who will compare love with an old story?

*Langs.* It is so nevertheless, my treasure, and to be sure the oldest, that I know.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Silence!—Doris is speaking—but so low, that one cannot understand her.

*Fritz.* O you make me inexpressibly happy!

*Langs.* Now there we have it! she has said yes.

*Fritz.* My beloved! my future bride!

*Mrs. V. Langs.* What rapture! I am quite moved.

*Langs.* (*yawning.*) So am I.

*Fritz.* Suffer me to impress the ardent kiss of first love upon your hand, upon your lips.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Ah, my treasure! embrace me!

*Langs.* Why so, my treasure?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* In order to celebrate the recollection of our first love.

*Langs.* Very well my treasure. (*they embrace.*) But surely I was not your first love?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Just the same, you are at all events my last.

*Fritz.* Receive, dear maiden, this lace veil, which will veil neither your charms, nor your virtue.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* How gallant!

*Langs.* That runs in the blood.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Anything so pretty you have never said to me.

*Langs.* I think more, than I say.

*Fritz.* O refuse no longer to receive it.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* The sly girl is even yet refusing.

*Fritz.* No, it is not too costly for you——

*Mrs. V. Langs.* I must go and help him. (*whilst she goes into the chamber.*) Enough children! you are made for each other. Come out, to the feet of your father, into the arms of your mother!

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## SCENE X.

FRITZ. BABET *veiled*. THE FORMER.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*Draws Fritz and Babet from the door. At the same moment it thunders.*) Hark! it thunders. Heaven itself approves your union. Cheer up husband! Bless the youthful pair. (*Fritz and Babet kneel before his chair.*)

*Langs.* With all my heart!

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Receive also my maternal blessing! (*it thunders again.*) And may you never in your matrimonial state live to see any other storm, but such as this, which comes so *à propos* to accompany my words with due solemnity.

*Langs.* FIAT!

## SCENE XI.

DORIS *breathless through the middle door*. THE FORMER.

*Dor.* Well, Mamma? what does all this mean—

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Doris!? (*she screams loudly*) Ah! Deceit!

*Bab.* I am innocent! (*she springs up and runs back into her chamber.*)

*Langs.* Doris *in duplo*.

*Dor.* A storm is gathering; it already rains, and I must catch the monkey.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* I am petrified!

*Langs.* He has got off with my blessing.

*Dor.* What does all this mean?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Accursed cousin! this is again one of your roguish tricks.

*Fritz.* Gracious aunt, you have given me your blessing.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Do you think, I shall be so silly, as to let Babet keep the lace veil?

*Dor.* What? Babet a lace veil?

*Fritz.* Take back the veil, and give me Babet.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Here stands your future bride! and the beggar girl shall suffer for her impudence. (*she follows Babet.*)

*Fritz.* The storm beats in! I must quickly put up a conductor. (*he follows his aunt.*)

*Dor.* What is this, Papa? I understand not a word of the whole matter.

*Langs.* Nor I either, my child.

*Dor.* But I will know it! I must know it! do you go in the meantime down into the garden and catch the monkey; it sits upon the great pear tree. (*she follows the others.*)

*Langs.* (*alone*) I, why surely not!—you yourself are a monkey. And if you all sat together upon the great pear tree, I would not stir a jot. (*it thunders from time to time.*) It thunders finely—and the rain dashes against the window—it makes one sleep so sweetly—(*he nods*)—Yes, if there was no sleep—an excellent invention—I will lay a wager, it comes from a tormented husband.—(*He goes to sleep.—The curtain remains open—the storm continues, and becomes violent. At every loud clap Langsalm wakes up a little, but nods again immediately.*)

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

[*The Orchestra plays a suitable symphony.*]

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## ACT III.

## SCENE I.

LANGSALM *sleeping.* MRS. V. LANGSALM *pushes FRITZ out of DORIS's door.*

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Away, young sir! you have nothing to seek here.

*Fritz.* I do not seek anything, I have already found.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* What have you found?

*Fritz.* A maiden, that I love, a maiden, that returns my love.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Fudge! with your money you will find them everywhere.

*Fritz.* Fye, dear aunt, is love then sold by the yard? or by the pound?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Take a lesson from the treasury of experience: to mortals everything is venal.

*Fritz.* Oh by no means!

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Interest is the great wheel in the machine of the world.

*Fritz.* Suppose I grant that; must then this wheel consist of gold?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Gold represents every thing.

*Fritz.* Even virtue and love?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Every thing! Every thing! and if you think, that Babet loves you, in that manner which you call

love, then you are a vain fool! She wishes to marry you, and nothing further.

*Fritz.* Very well, I too wish nothing further beforehand.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* She is miserably poor.

*Fritz.* She has the most beautiful rosy cheeks.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* You know however, that I have brought her up out of charity.?

*Fritz.* O yes, you throw it at her daily.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Her Father the ass, was a Lieutenant of Have-nothing. He married a miss Have-nothing, went to the war, left mother and child to my charge—

*Fritz.* To the mother you have generously granted a little place in your family vault.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* He has now been wandering about the world for seventeen years. He has become a major—yes! honour is a precious thing, only it is not fit for eating.

*Fritz.* Sometimes on account of it both eating and drinking are forgotten.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* In short cousin, your romance will come to nothing. I shall send Babet very early tomorrow to a place, where she will forget her love caprices; and you are either this very evening Doris's affianced Bridegroom, or the will of your Father—you understand me. (*She is about to go.*)

*Fritz.* Only one little word more, dear aunt! Do you wish to send Babet away from hence?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* That I am about to do.

*Fritz.* Where?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Do you think, that I should be such a fool, as to make you my confidant. The Knight errant might indeed gallop after her?—No, no, your place is at Doris's feet. Babet you will never see again. (*Exit.*)

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## SCENE. II.

FRITZ. LANGSALM *sleeping.*

*Fritz.* Well?—do you intend it?—that is, most certainly, a reckoning without the host.—Then to-morrow? to-morrow at the earliest?—we have no time to lose therefore. What is there here to consider of? I run off with Babet, and that, this very evening. If she only consents—if I can only find a minute, to make her feel my love and danger.—What hinders me immediately upon the spot—My Uncle there?—him we will soon put out of the way. (*He shakes him*) Uncle! dear Uncle!

*Langs.* Well? What is the matter?

*Fritz.* The storm has beaten in.

*Langs.* Indeed?

*Fritz.* Here in the house.

*Langs.* Has the lightning struck my wife?

*Fritz.* No, but the whole house is in flames.

*Langs.* In flames? then, to be sure, we must go out of it?

*Fritz.* The staircase is already on fire.

*Langs.* How can we save our lives then?

*Fritz.* Out of the window?

*Langs.* I out of the window?

*Fritz.* It is hightime. Do you not already smell the smoke?

*Langs.* Yes, yes, I smell the smoke.

*Fritz.* Quick therefore! Quick!

*Langs.* I shall break my neck.

*Fritz.* Nay. Here into the garden. The terrace is high, the orange tubs under the windows you can reach with your feet.

*Langs.* But if I crush the young orange trees with my weight?

*Fritz.* Never mind! my aunt would surely rather save her husband, than her orange trees?

*Langs.* Listen cousin, that is doubtful.

*Fritz.* Well then burn! I hasten—

*Langs.* No no, I do not want to burn! the deuce! to burn I do not want! only help me out.

*Fritz.* With all my heart. Mount here upon this chair.

*Langs.* (*obeying*) Mount! Oh! I must jump!

*Fritz.* Do you perceive nothing? The smoke becomes still stronger.

*Langs.* Yes yes, it already makes my eyes smart.

*Fritz.* Put your right leg out of the window—there—now the left—and clasp with both hands the window frame, and let yourself down gently.

*Langs.* (*already half-out*) Where do you remain then, cousin?

*Fritz.* I will still save here, what I can. Now let go.

*Langs.* Must I?

*Fritz.* Yes yes! the flame already beats in at the door.

*Langs.* Well I go! (*he is heard to fall*)

*Fritz.* (*looking after him*) Plump! this will cost a half dozen young trees. He is provided for. Through the window he cannot come in again, and before he waddles round to the house door, I already have the advantage.

. (*he is about to go to Babet*)

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## SCENE. III.

MRS. V. LANGSALM *through the middle door.* FRITZ.

Mrs. V. Langs. Whither cousin ?

Fritz. (*aside*) Curse it ! (*loud*) Ah dear aunt ! I seek for help ! help !

Mrs. V. Langs. Help ? What has happened ?

Fritz. My uncle has lost his reason.

Mrs. V. Langs. My husband ? how so ?

Fritz. Only think, he wished to jump with me for a wager.

Mrs. V. Langs. My husband ? to jump ?

Fritz. Yes, and when I reminded him of his age, his clumsiness, he laughed at me, called me a timid hare, and in order to prove to me, that he was in earnest, he jumped without further ceremony out of the window.

Mrs. V. Langs. Are you mad ? and he did jump !

Fritz. If you do not believe me, then only look yourself. There he hobbles down the alley, and your orange trees are all crushed.

Mrs. V. Langs. (*looks out*) What ? my orange trees ?—Mr. Von Langsalm ! Mr. Timotheus Sebastian Von Langsalm !—he neither hears nor sees.—Ah gracious heavens ! was not the man then already poor enough in mind ! must he lose even the little that he had ! (*she runs away.*)

Fritz. I have got rid of her too. But she runs as quick as a spider ; I dare not lose any time. (*he is about to go to Babet*)

## SCENE. IV.

SELICOUR. FRITZ.

*Sel.* Hush ! Mr. Von Hurlebusch !

*Fritz.* (*aside*) Must the devil bring him here too !  
(*aloud*) What is your pleasure ?

*Sel.* The post horses are ordered.

*Fritz.* Of that I am glad. (*aside*) I can use them.

*Sel.* My servant Lafleur has bribed the postillion.

*Fritz.* Did you not go yourself to the posting house ?

*Sel.* No. Wherefore ?

*Fritz.* In order to be quite sure of the thing.

*Sel.* Lafleur is the most cunning fellow in the world.

*Fritz.* But it still would be better, if you went yourself.  
Indeed, dear Baron, go, go, do me the favour, directly upon the spot.

*Sel.* I tell you, it is not necessary, Lafleur is a very cunning fellow.

*Fritz.* (*aside*) Well then I wish, that you were sitting in the great hole, which Maupertuis\* once wished to dig.

\* *Maupertuis*,—a celebrated French academician, against whom Voltaire exerted all his wit and satire. In the year 1736, he was sent, with other Philosophers, by the king of France to the polar circle, to measure a degree, in order to ascertain the figure of the earth. This gave rise to Voltaire's satire, entitled : "*Diatribes du Docteur Akakia*," where, amongst many other schemes, that, to which *Kotzebue* here alludes, is ridiculed in the following words : "Il doit encore être assuré qu'il lui sera difficile de faire, comme il le prétend, un trou qui aille jusqu'au centre de la terre, (où il veut apparemment se cacher de

*Sel.* It would be better, that I should assure myself of the intentions of your charming cousin.

*Fritz.* Yes—Yes there you are right. Do you know what? Now is the most favourable moment, to speak with her in private.

*Sel.* Where? Where?

*Fritz.* The poor Maiden! You know, how unworthily she is treated here in the house.

*Sel.* Even on that account, I wish to save her.

*Fritz.* But you have not perhaps yet observed, that she is obliged every evening to milk the cows like the commonest dairymaid?

*Sel.* Is it possible? *Quelle horreur!*

*Fritz.* Even now she is down in the cow-stall, where she will still remain at least a quarter of an hour. Hasten, Hasten!

*Sel.* In the cow-stall?

*Fritz.* Now indeed, this will afford a splendid rendezvous. If you speak there of your love, and the cows accompany you with their bellowing, that will be new, that will be original.

*Sel.* Just so, but——

*Fritz.* Only do not be long in considering, the moment is escaping.

*Sel.* Where is then the cow-stall?

*Fritz.* Close by the dove-cot. You cannot miss it.

*Sel.* But it rains hard?

*Fritz.* Are you afraid, that a shower will extinguish the flame of your love?

honte d' avoir avancé de telles choses), le trou exigeroit qu' on excavât au moins trois ou quatre cents lieues de pays, ce qui pourrait déranger le Système de la balance de l'Europe."

*Sel.* Not so, but my coat, my locks——

*Fritz.* Quick! there take my Uncle's mackintosh. (*reaches him a great cloak, which hangs upon a chair in the back ground*) There is also his garden hat covered with skin. (*he presses the hat upon his head, so that the powder is scattered about.*)

*Sel.* O Woe!

*Fritz.* What O woe? now you look, just like a banished man now away! away! (*he shoves him out at the door.*)

*Sel.* But it is already dark——

*Fritz.* So much the better! Cupid's torch shines in the cow-stall. (*he pushes him entirely out.*) Well, he was sent upon a fool's errand. Now is the air pure. If the girl Doris has not again stolen up by the back stairs. (*he peeps through the keyhole*) No. Babet is quite alone. The girl child! has her little head supported by her hand. He upon my bosom must she support it. Now we will venture (*he is about to go in.*)

## SCENE V.

*DORIS through the middle door. FRITZ.*

*Dor.* Cousin Hurlebusch!

*Fritz.* (*starts back.*) Has everything then conspired against me!

*Dor.* Probably you are looking for me?

*Fritz.* Certainly, for whom else?

*Dor.* To make amends for your foolish tricks?

*Fritz.* I beg pardon, fair cousin, if I play foolish tricks who is in fault?

*Dor.* Your folly.

*Fritz.* No, your own wisdom.

*Dor.* Mine? how so?

*Fritz.* Who has brought us the fop from town? Who has recommended his example to me, in order to fashion myself after it?

*Dor.* I did! and would that you had followed my advice.

*Fritz.* Well? most charming. A man, who is not even ashamed, to make court to our dairymaid—

*Dor.* What?!

*Fritz.* To steal after her, even into the cow-stall—

*Dor.* Are you raving?

*Fritz.* In the evening twilight, wrapped up like a watchman.

*Dor.* Cousin, I took you merely for a fool, now I perceive, that you are a slanderer too.

*Fritz.* Thanks for the fool; but the character of a slanderer I cannot accept, for what I say, is true.

*Dor.* You ought to know, my gentle young sir, that a well-bred man of the world, whom I think worthy of my company, of my favour, can never so far forget himself.

*Fritz.* But the deuce take me, if he has not just now gone to the cow-stall in my uncle's mackintosh.

*Dor.* No, I cannot believe it.

*Fritz.* Listen, if it is not true, then I will this very evening marry old Mrs. Krick. Now will you believe me?

*Dor.* The proofs! the proofs!

*Fritz.* At your service, at your service. Only go yourself to the cow-stall, you will still find him there.

*Dor.* Yes assuredly! if it did not rain so hard, I would go, in order to put to shame your slanderous tongue.

*Fritz.* There—there is my uncle's umbrella. (*he opens it.*)

*Dor.* Here with it ! but if you have lied—

*Fritz.* But if I am right ?

*Dor.* Then I will banish the indelicate traitor for ever from my presence ! [*Exit.*]

*Fritz.* Ha ! ha ! ha ! the sweet gentleman I have brought into a good scrape. Let them look to it, how they will settle matters between themselves. I must hasten, to gather the fruits of my roguery. (*he slips away to Babet.*)

## SCENE VI.

MRS. V. LANGSALM. MR. V. LANGSALM *limping and wet.*

*Mrs. V. Langs.* But only tell me, husband, whether you have quite lost your few senses ?

*Langs.* It would be no wonder, my treasure, after such a fright.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* What Satan then has driven you out of the window ?

*Langs.* I was driven to it, if I wished not to be burnt.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Where does it burn then ?

*Langs.* Here in the house.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* In your head.

*Langs.* Has not the lightning beaten in ?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* It has beaten into your head !

*Langs.* No indeed, my angel—

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Yes indeed, my Satan ! Only look out of the window, how you have crushed my dearest orange trees.

*Langs.* This the lightning has probably done.—Only

have compassion! I am wet, as a blind kitten, which one throws into a pond.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Who has told you so?

*Langs.* Cousin Hurlebusch.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* How?

*Langs.* I had sought here a little repose, when he seized me like the driver of a wheelbarrow; screams, the house is in flames, lets me even smell the smoke, says, the staircase is already on fire, places a chair before the window for me, and rolls me out upon the terrace.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* The villain! And to me he said, you had wished to jump with him for a wager.

*Langs.* I to jump! my treasure, what are you thinking of!

*Mrs. V. Langs.* The rascal! where is he? where does he stay?

## SCENE VII.

DORIS. SELICOUR. THE FORMER.

*Dor.* Leave me! you are an abominable man!

*Sel.* But only listen to me—

*Langs.* What does this mummary mean?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Have you been taking a walk in this pouring rain?

*Dor.* A beautiful walk! This gentleman runs after our dairy-maids even into the cow-stall.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* How! I will not hope—

*Sel.* Heaven forbid!—

*Dor.* I myself have caught him.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Be ashamed of yourself, Mr. Von Selicour.

*Dor.* Yes, if he yet possessed any shame.

*Sel.* Only permit——

*Langs.* And I really think, he has put on my mackintosh?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* In my house propriety must be observed.

*Dor.* One must not make himself the laughing stock of the servants.

*Langs.* And he has put on my hat too.

*Sel.* But I beg you——

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Such misconduct is unheard of in my house!

*Dor.* I shall be reproached with having brought you here.

*Langs.* And perhaps too they have taken him for me.

*Sel.* But only permit me to speak. Young Hurlebusch is to blame for all.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* My nephew?

*Dor.* My cousin?

*Langs.* Again already?

*Sel.* He told me, Miss Doris had gone down, in order to——to——

*Dor.* Surely not, to milk the cows?

*Sel.* Not that, but in order to inhale the fresh air——

*Dor.* In the cow-stall? I am not consumptive.

*Sel.* In short, upon the word of a gentleman, he sent me down, put the mackintosh upon me himself, placed the hat upon my head—and since I had not seen the young lady for so long a time—and since I hoped to find her there—and since one readily believes, what one wishes——

*Mrs. V. Langs.* There is some mystery in the matter.

*Langs.* Has he told you nothing of the great fire?

*Dor.* In the end it is indeed a roguish trick of my gentle cousin. He persuaded me too.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* It almost seems, he has wished to get rid of us all. What is the bet, I shall find him. (*she opens the door.*) Right, there he sits. (*she goes in and speaks from within.*) Come out my charming cousin.

(*she leads Fritz out by the ear.*)

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SCENE VIII.

FRITZ. THE FORMER.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*Still holding him.*) So you dare to jest with people, to whom you owe respect?

*Dor.* (*who seizes him by the other ear, as often as Mrs. V. Langsalm lets him go.*) Do you think, cousin, you may practice such college tricks with ladies?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* To impose upon me—(*draws him to her.*)

*Dor.* (*draws him to her.*) To send me in the rain upon a fool's errand—

*Mrs. V. Langs.* To instigate me against my beloved husband—(*draws him to her.*)

*Dor.* (*draws him to her.*) To inspire me with distrust of the good manners of our guest—

*Fritz.* (*holding his ears with both hands.*) I beg pardon, ladies, how long are my ears to be at your service?

*Langs.* No, cousin, this is too bad—

*Sel.* It borders upon ill-breeding.

*Fritz.* I observe, a perfect harmony of feeling prevails here, and this miracle have I worked.

*Langs.* Why did you tell me then: the house was on fire?

*Fritz.* Is it not on fire? I am glad of it!

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Why did you make me believe, my husband had proposed to jump with you?

*Fritz.* Does he not wish to jump? Well, I think, in that he does very right.

*Sel.* Why did you tell me, I should find the young lady in the cow-stall?

*Fritz.* Was she not there? I am sorry for it.

*Dor.* Why did you persuade me, Mr. Von Selicour ran after our dairy-maids?

*Fritz.* Did he not do so? (*gallantly.*) Then probably he wears other chains.

*Dor.* You are an absurd man, upon whom one must not confer the honour, of being angry with.

[*Exit through the middle-door.*]

*Fritz.* Your humble servant!

*Mrs. V. Langs.* A wanton boy, who escaped the rod too early, and who will be quite lost, if a sensible wife does not soon set his head straight. (*she follows Doris.*)

*Fritz.* Your humble servant.

*Sel.* A thoughtless fellow, whom I should chastise, if the laws of hospitality did not restrain me. (*he follows the rest.*)

*Fritz.* Your humble servant.

*Langs.* Yes, yes, cousin, you are a blustering fellow, to whom I shall be compelled to read a long lecture—

*Fritz.* O woe!

*Langs.* As soon as I shall have first slept a little. (*he waddles into his chamber.*)

*Fritz.* Your most obedient humble servant.

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## SCENE IX.

FRITZ *alone.*

Well. Now I have shaken them all off again. But that Babet will not consent to be carried off by me—that she meets me with gratitude, propriety, modesty—that she would rather follow her aunt to the altar of the cloister, than me to the marriage altar—in reality this is very proper of her, very proper indeed—but vexatious—very vexatious!

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## SCENE. X.

MAJOR LANGSALM. FRITZ.

*(During this act it has become evening.)*

**Major.** It rains as at the deluge, and it is as dark as eight days before the Creation.—I beg pardon. I am a traveller. Night and the storm have driven me in here. I think I have missed my way, and can find no one, who knows how to put me right.

**Fritz.** You are welcome, Sir. Whither are you bound?

**Major.** To the mansion of one Mr. Von Langsalm.

**Fritz.** Well well.

**Major.** Am I still far from it?

**Fritz.** No, not at all. May I ask, what takes you there?

**Major.** I have a daughter there, whom I left in the cradle, and now have not seen for sixteen years.

**Fritz.** You are surely not Major Von Langsalm?

**Major.** Yes, I am.

*Fritz.* Excellent. I have the honour, to know the young Lady your daughter.

*Major.* (*with much interest.*) Indeed?

*Fritz.* She is a most lovely girl, beautiful, modest, discreet.

*Major.* By my soul! this I am glad to hear.

*Fritz.* You will find there also a nephew, a certain young Hurlebusch, the most lively, agreeable man in the world.

*Major.* They have described him to me as a waggish fellow.

*Fritz.* Slander.

*Major.* As a good for nothing man——

*Fritz.* Malicious slander.

*Major.* This I am glad of. But where truly am I then?

*Fritz.* You are—at a country seat—which is distant only half a league from Langsalm.

*Major.* And the owner.

*Fritz.* A Mr. Corpulent. You probably are acquainted with that Family?

*Major.* No, it is quite unknown to me.

*Fritz.* O the family of the Corpulents is very great and very considerable.

*Major.* I doubt it not. Probably you are the son of the house?

*Fritz.* At your service.

*Major.* Well young Mr. Corpulent, you could do me a very great service.

*Fritz.* With pleasure.

*Major.* My horse can go no further. Have you not some pony in the stable, which could carry an old soldier this evening to Langsalm?

*Fritz.* To-day this is impossible.

*Major.* Why?

*Fritz.* Our coachman happens to be married to day.

*Major.* Then I will not disturb him. But the groom—

*Fritz.* He has broken his leg.

*Major.* That was very stupid of him. Well if this is the case, then I must beg for a night's lodging.

*Fritz.* You will be very welcome to my parents, and I hasten, to bring them hither. Still I must apprize you beforehand of one circumstance: my father, and Mr. Von Langsalm, your brother, have been for some time past sworn enemies.

*Major.* Why so?

*Fritz.* A trifle. Both were at a ball, in the town, where also a certain beautiful Countess Turteltack was present. Your brother and my father both strove for the honor of opening the ball with this beautiful lady. She gave Mr. Von Langsalm the preference; my father was beside himself, and hence a violent hatred has arisen, which both will probably carry to the grave.

*Major.* My brother is a fool. I had never heard indeed, that he was so great a lover of opening balls.

*Fritz.* Just like my father.

*Major.* He is said to have become very stout.

*Fritz.* Just like my father.

*Major.* Then they ought both to have left dancing alone.

*Fritz.* The beautiful Countess Turteltack was alone to blame.

*Major.* Turteltack! A curious family.

*Fritz.* It is carried so far, Major, that my father becomes enraged at the mere name of Langsalm.

*Major.* It is however an honest name.

*Fritz.* You cannot think, how much I am hurt at this weakness of my father. But—I owe him respect—

*Major.* Quite right, young sir.

*Fritz.* And therefore I venture to request, that you will permit me, to introduce you to my parents beforehand under another name, in order that the laws of hospitality may not be infringed.

*Major.* Mr. Corpulent, this is a strange request. I have never yet disowned my honest name.

*Fritz.* Only for this evening, in order to prevent mischief. To-morrow early I shall have the honor of accompanying you myself to Langsalm.—Now I will fetch my parents. Yet in order not to leave you here alone, I will in the meantime introduce you to my sister. She is also named Babet, like your daughter. (*To himself, whilst he goes to Babet's chamber.*) A good opportunity, to avenge myself on the little prude. (*He opens the door.*) Babet! dear Babet! just one moment.

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## SCENE XI.

BABET. THE FORMER.

*Fritz.* We have a guest, Major Von Turteltack.

*Major.* How? what?

*Fritz.* I will fetch the others. In the meantime, I beg of you to entertain the stranger.

*Major.* I shall be badly off here. (*aside.*)

*Fritz.* (*draws Babet aside.*) Only imagine, dear cousin, he has just now confided to me, that my aunt has destined him for your husband.

*Bab.* (*much frightened*) For my husband?

*Fritz.* Your bethrothal is this evening, to-morrow your

wedding, and the day after he takes you with him to his garrison. (*Exit.*)

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SCENE XII.

BABET and the MAJOR.

*Bab.* (*aside.*) Alas! what have I heard!

*Major.* You appear so perplexed, miss? I should be sorry, if I were the cause of it.

*Bab.* (*with constrained courtesy.*) Nay, Major—I am glad—(*aside.*) The rogue has only made sport with me.

*Major.* Do you know Babet Von Langsalm.

*Bab.* (*smiling.*) Do I know her?

*Major.* I take great interest in the maiden.

*Bab.* (*still more perplexed.*) Indeed?

*Major.* I love her, as my life.

*Bab.* (*aside.*) O woe! my cousin has then spoken the truth.

*Major.* In confidence, I have come, in order to take her away from hence.

*Bab.* But—do you then also know—whether she will willingly follow you?

*Major.* O of that I am not afraid.

*Bab.* If she now—perhaps has a different inclination—

*Major.* That matters not. Her love to me will not suffer on that account.

*Bab.* But I assure you, sir, you will make the poor maiden unhappy.

*Major.* Surely not indeed! I know better.

*Babet.* (*aside.*) Here I must come to a quick determination. (*loud.*) Major, I consider you an honest man.

*Major.* Your most obedient servant! the whole army considers me as such.

*Bab.* Permit me then, candidly to confess to you: I cannot marry you.

*Major.* (*much astonished.*) What?

*Bab.* My heart is no longer free.

*Major.* What does that matter to me?

*Bab.* Whatever my aunt may have written to you, I knew nothing of it.

*Major.* What can this mean?

*Bab.* It is impossible that you could wish to make a poor maiden your wife by force.

*Major.* What!—Miss—hem! very good.—(*aside.*) Her brother should have told me beforehand, that his sister is crazy.

### SCENE XIII.

LANGSALM. THE FORMER.

*Langs.* Your servant, Sir, you are welcome.

*Major.* Have I the honour, to speak with the master of the house?

*Langs.* (*sighing deeply.*) Master of the house—Oh yes, I am so.

*Major.* Pardon me; the night, the storm—

*Langs.* Without ceremony. Make yourself at home. One sleeps excellently at my house. My beds are the best in the whole country.

*Major.* Your hospitable reception demands all my gratitude, and in order to shew it to you, I will endeavour, to reconcile you again with a man, in whom I take great interest, and who, as I hear, has had the misfortune, to draw upon himself your enmity.

*Langs.* I understand you not.

*Major.* To speak out is my custom. You hate Mr. Von Langsalm.

*Langs.* Whom?

*Major.* Mr. Timotheus Sebastian Von Langsalm.

*Langs.* Do I hate him?

*Major.* I know all. But permit me, to say to you, that the ground of your hatred is nevertheless very insignificant.

*Langs.* Ha! ha! ha! why do I hate him then?

*Major.* Well, you wished to open the ball with the Countess Turteltack.

*Langs.* I? wished to open the ball? Babet, how do you like that?

*Major.* The Countess gave the preference to Mr. Von Langsalm—

*Langs.* She gave the preference to me—

*Major.* (*Lively.*) Not to you, but to Mr. Von Langsalm.

*Langs.* Babet, only listen.

*Major.* A man in your years—pardon me—ought to be above such nonsense. I do not mean by saying so to defend Mr. Von Langsalm. I know him very intimately, although I have not seen him for sixteen years.

*Langs.* Do you know him very intimately? ha! ha! ha!

*Major.* Do I know him? He is sometimes a fool, that I grant, but a good natured man, who would not offend a child.

*Langs.* What? a fool? Do you dare, to call me a fool in my own house?

*Major.* Who the deuce means you?

*Langs.* A fool? see then! a fool! I will not permit that.

*Major.* Well, well, I am glad, that you take his part.

*Langs.* That I take his part? ha! ha! ha! (*draws Babet aside.*) What do you think, Babet? I believe, he is crazy.

*Bab.* It appears so to me too.

*Major.* (*aside.*) I know not, what I ought to think of these people? I believe they are all crazy.

*Langs.* The poor man, we must have compassion upon him. (*loud.*) Come, sir, supper is ready; and if it please you, we will empty a bottle of wine to the health of Mr. Von Langsalm.

*Major.* With all my heart; and *pereat* the Countess Turteltack!

*Langs.* *Pereat!* but who then is the Countess Turteltack?

*Major.* Do you not know her?

*Langs.* I have never in my life heard of her.

*Major.* Neither do I know her. (*aside.*) He is crazy upon my soul.

*Langs.* (*in going out to Babet.*) Yes, yes, it is true, he is not quite sane.

*Major.* (*in a low voice whilst going out.*) I have got into a madhouse.

*Langs.* Be pleased only to walk in. [*Exeunt ambo.*]

*Bab.* And to this madman does my aunt wish to marry me! (*she follows.*)

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

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## ACT. IV.

## SCENE I.

Fritz alone, afterwards LAFLEUR.

Oho! there they had me again at a pinch. Pity, that the Major has so soon betrayed himself, it might still have afforded much sport.—But where then was Selicour? he must not escape with impunity.—I have sworn, to place a cap and bells upon him, and an honorable man keeps his word. (*he calls in the antechamber*) Lafleur! come in.

*Laf.* (*comes.*)

*Fritz.* Where is your Master?

*Laf.* He was out of humour and went to the parson.

*Fritz.* To the parson? what is he doing there?

*Laf.* They play backgammon together.

*Fritz.* Go, fetch him hither, but quick! I have important things to tell him.

*Laf.* (*Exit.*)

*Fritz.* (*alone*) He shall not then have ordered the posthorses for nothing.—But how if he does not trust me?—I could not blame him for it, for he has already seen some little touches of my manner—Stop! there is still Babet's letter to her father, which she gave me this morning.—An Address it has not—if the contents—(*he runs over the Letter hastily*) excellent! the contents are certainly ambiguous; as though we had concerted it.—I hear the thoughtless fellow upon the stairs. Come, come.

## SCENE II.

FRITZ and SELICOUR.

*Sel.* What is your pleasure ?

*Fritz.* Good news from cousin Babet.

*Sel.* Do you wish to make a fool of me again ?

*Fritz.* Heaven forbid !

*Sel.* I have not forgotten the Cowstall.

*Fritz.* Was it then *my* fault, that Babet was pre-  
by the rain ?

*Sel.* Trickery.

*Fritz.* Only hear me, and you will learn to kn-  
honest heart.

*Sel.* Well, what is the matter ?

*Fritz.* They are about to marry Babet.

*Sel.* A new story.

*Fritz.* The intended Bridegroom is already in the h

*Sel.* Who ? Where ?

*Fritz.* A cursed odd fellow, a certain major Tur-  
who speaks of nothing else but cutting off noses and e

*Sel.* Where is he then ?

*Fritz.* In the Dining Room. If you had not been  
ing backgammon with the parson, who knows, wheth-  
would be still alive.

*Sel.* (*Frightened*) Why so ?

*Fritz.* I tell you, the fellow is as fierce as Sampson's  
and looks like Methusalem in dragoon's uniform.

*Sel.* How comes he here then so suddenly ?

*Fritz.* My aunt has written for him, in order to g  
of Babet.

*Sel.* And what says Babet ?

*Fritz.* She is beside herself; she is willing to run off with you, the sooner the better.

*Sel.* If one could but trust you.

*Fritz.* Unbelieving Thomas, there, there is a letter from Babet. Now will you trust me?

*Sel.* A letter to me?

*Fritz.* Read, read.

*Sel.* (*reads*) "Save me! I can no longer endure it here. "The tenderest love shall reward you. I will, if it must be, "suffer hunger and sorrow with you, only take me from this "place, as soon as ever it is possible. My cousin Hurlebusch "sends this letter; he means kindly towards me, with him you "can concert every thing. Your, even until death, faithful "daughter Babet." Daughter? Why daughter?

*Fritz.* There see, anguish has confused her senses, therefore hasten—

*Sel.* Yes, I will save her, the dear tender maiden!

*Fritz.* Are the posthorses ordered?

*Sel.* At my beck.

*Fritz.* Then come here at midnight.

*Sel.* (*startled*) At midnight?—here in this room?

*Fritz.* To be sure, here is Babet's sleeping chamber.

*Sel.* I—yes—I am not afraid—but the parson has put strange things into my head.

*Fritz.* What things?

*Sel.* It is said that the castle is haunted.

*Fritz.* Nonsense.

*Sel.* In particular a white form is said often to be seen in this room, an ancestress of your family—

*Fritz.* Now I remember, my aunt has also sometimes told me of it.

*Sel.* Now must I confess to you my weakness : I would engage with living men, although there were a dozen of them ; but with ghosts—

*Fritz.* (*aside.*) Stop ! that we can turn to account.  
(*loud.*) You are right, it is no joke with ghosts. One cuts them asunder, and they flow again together like quicksilver. Do you know what, I am a good-hearted fellow, I will bring Babet to you.

*Sel.* Will you do that ?

*Fritz.* For me my ancestress will have respect, I belong to the family. Only do you have the postchaise ready at the garden door punctually at twelve o'clock.

*Sel.* That shall be done.

*Fritz.* Do you remain at a little distance upon your horse, and as soon as you hear, that some one is placed in the carriage, then push forward.

*Sel.* That I will do.

*Fritz.* You must instruct the coachman to drive behind you at full gallop.

*Sel.* Over stick and stone.

*Fritz.* Then make your preparations quickly.

*Sel.* In ten minutes. [*Exit.*]

*Fritz.* (*alone.*) Ha ! ha ! ha ! The matter is threaded very well. Now, Fate ! thou universal soul of the world ! now is it for thee, to work up the thread.

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### SCENE. III.

Mrs. V. LANGSALM and FRITZ.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Cousin, you have been again playing very foolish tricks.

*Fritz.* Dear aunt, this you have already told me a hundred times at table.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* To incite both your old uncles against each other—

*Fritz.* They have not surely killed each other.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* To wish to marry the father with the daughter—

*Fritz.* They have surely not married each other.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Only tell me! when you will at length become sensible?

*Fritz.* Ah gracious aunt! if you but knew, what a change has come over me in the last quarter of an hour—

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Over you? that would be a wonder.

*Fritz.* Yes, a wonder it is too. Do you not see, how I still tremble? how pale I am?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* What has happened to you?

*Fritz.* I had placed myself here for a short time in my uncle's easy-chair, and had fallen asleep. There appeared to me in my dream our ancestress, of whom you have sometimes told me. She looked at me fiercely, and reproached me with not having yet married Doris—

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Do you see cousin! even the ghosts—

*Fritz.* I never believed in them. Even in my dream did I try to scorn her. But then she spoke to me with a hollow, fearful voice: Fritz Hurlebusch! I summon you to this hall at midnight. Then will I appear to you awake, and if you do not then obey, then woe! woe! woe!

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Go on.

*Fritz.* At the last woe I awoke and shuddered.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* And what have you resolved?

*Fritz.* Advise me, dear aunt.

*Mrs. V. Langs. (aside.)* This we can turn to account. *(loud.)* Suppose, my dear cousin, you had the courage to come here, and our ancestress appeared to you indeed, and repeated her warning; what would you do?

*Fritz.* I would beg of you, to make preparations for my wedding with Doris to-morrow.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Are you in earnest?

*Fritz.* Ah! when one has just conversed with ghosts, he is not at all in a jesting humour.

*Mrs. V. Langs. (aside.)* Stay, rogue! our ancestress shall appear to you.

*Fritz. (aside.)* She goes into the trap.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Tell me, how did she look?

*Fritz.* A long, white figure, almost like a Nun.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Quite right, thus is she described. Well cousin, it is already more than half-past eleven. The others will go to bed also immediately, and *I* am much too timid, I would not remain here a moment longer. But only take courage, if the ghost appears to you, it will do you no harm. I will creep in the meantime into my bed, and draw the coverlid over my head. *(she goes into her chamber.)*

*Fritz. (alone.)* I understand, my gracious aunt. You must possess more wits, if you would outwit me. Wait, you shall be paid.

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#### SCENE IV.

DORIS. FRITZ.

*Dor. (yawning with a light in her hand.)* This was still wanting, that a wearisome uncle should come here, in

order to tell us of his heroic deeds, until he sent us all to sleep. (*to Fritz.*) Good night, rogue. (*she is about to go into her room.*)

*Fritz.* O beautiful little cousin, tarry yet a moment.

*Dor.* Wherefore? I am sleepy.

*Fritz.* Already for half an hour have I been on the watch for you.

*Dor.* What do you wish of me?

*Fritz.* I have something at my heart.

*Dor.* Probably another trick.

*Fritz.* Which you will help me to play.

*Dor.* I? why surely not.

*Fritz.* What is the bet?—you know that I must marry you?

*Dor.* *Must?* very gallant—

*Fritz.* *Wish* too.

*Dor.* Indeed? since when?

*Fritz.* O I have always wished, only not like my aunt in her old common way. To ask a maiden in marriage in Sunday attire, to receive the consent of father and mother, to be betrothed in the presence of the whole family, and at last to lead to the ceremony, costlily clad, the pious bride, in order to stammer forth under a plentiful stream of tears from all old aunts a heartbreaking *yes*—see, dear cousin, this is not any way, it has already long gone out of fashion.

*Dor.* Well, how otherwise then?

*Fritz.* A carrying off in great haste, a helter-skelter marriage! that is merry! so one springs with pleasure into matrimony, and if you have a mind——

*Dor.* Are you mad? why is this necessary? since we very comfortably with the consent of my parents——

*Fritz.* That is just the most objectionable part of the affair. Must Fritz Hurlebusch the most waggish fellow for ten miles round, marry like an old counsellor. No, indeed, that must not be. I would rather remain all my life long a bachelor.

*Dor.* Strange man. And what then is your plan?

*Fritz.* The most simple in the world. A postchaise stands behind the garden door. You steal at midnight out of your chamber, I carry you to the carriage, and huzza! huzza! up and away. We will drive about the woods during the night, that will be romantic; in the morning we will be married a few miles from home, return in triumph in the evening, and soundly laugh at my aunt with her great matrimonial preparations.

*Dor.* Nothing will come of that.

*Fritz.* Well? I am sorry for that, then nothing will come of the whole affair.

*Dor. (scornfully.)* Do you think, that it signifies so very much to me?

*Fritz.* Well, I indeed thought, a lively fellow in possession of half a million—

*Dor.* Who plays every day half a million foolish tricks—

*Fritz.* Who under your guidance will soon become a tame creature—

*Dor.* Yes, if I was sure of that—

*Fritz.* I swear it by all the gods and demi-gods!

*Dor.* Well, I will consider of the droll proposal. Good night.

*Fritz.* Consider? heaven forbid! Consideration would spoil the whole affair, would rob it of the *piquant*. Once, twice, thrice, quick, quick, immediately upon the spot.

*Dor.* Are you trifling?

*Fritz.* The postchaise is already at the garden door.

*Dor.* Are you raving?

*Fritz.* Beautiful, most lovely little cousin! only do not be too long in thinking about it. It will be a charming expedition. In a few hours we shall be husband and wife, and shall have matter to laugh at for the rest of our lives.

*Dor.* Are you speaking in earnest?

*Fritz.* I am burning with the desire, to lift you into the carriage.

*Dor.* And the carriage is indeed already there?

*Fritz.* You can see it from your window.

*Dor.* (*aside.*) The affair would, to be sure, be thus settled in the quickest manner.

*Fritz.* (*aside.*) She bites.

*Dor.* (*loud.*) But nobody is yet asleep, the servants will perceive us.

*Fritz.* O, that I have already provided for. Are you afraid of ghosts?

*Dor.* Ridiculous question! ha! ha! ha! ghosts!

*Fritz.* So much the better. You know, it is asserted, that the house is haunted?

*Dor.* Foolish nonsense.

*Fritz.* That a white lady is seen?

*Dor.* A nursery tale.

*Fritz.* To be sure, to be sure. But it will serve our purpose. As soon as the clock strikes twelve, wrap your sheet about your head, and march with measured strides straight through the garden, no one will then stop you.

*Dor.* Droll idea. And where shall I find you?

*Fritz.* In the garden, near the statue of Jocus.

*Dor.* Well, I will grant your wish, but upon one condition, that you have in future no other will, but mine.

*Fritz.* Certainly.

*Dor.* How late is it?

*Fritz.* Near midnight.

*Dor.* Then hold yourself in readiness. As soon as cousin Babet goes into her chamber, I will throw the sheet around me and appear. [*Exit.*]

*Fritz.* (*alone.*) This will afford a splendid sight! Now we will await it quietly. But where?—here in the hall it would please me best.—I hear somebody coming—without much ceremony. (*he creeps under the table.*)

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## SCENE V.

BABET. LANGSALM and the MAJOR. FRITZ.

*Langs.* (*showing the Major to his chamber.*) Here, brother, is your bed-chamber. And now for to-day enough!—it was a heavy day.—No one shall disturb me before three o'clock to-morrow afternoon, do you hear, Babet?—Good night, brother!

*Major.* Good night, you Seven-sleeper.

*Langs.* Ah, would that you spoke true! that I could for once enjoy the pleasure, of taking the precious rest, seven years one after another. (*goes into his chamber.*)

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## SCENE VI.

BABET. THE MAJOR. FRITZ *concealed*.

*Bab.* Dear, best father ! The happiness, to clasp you at last in my arms—it still appears to me, as though I dreamt.

*Major.* Girl, you have grown both tall and pretty.

*Bab.* I have become good, this I may boast of.

*Major.* Good, yes indeed ! without your childlike benefits I must have often suffered want.

*Bab.* How, my father ?

*Major.* Only tell me, how you obtained so much money ?

*Bab.* What money ?

*Major.* You have sent me however during these three years considerable sums.

*Bab.* I ?

*Major.* My brother is not master of a penny, and my sister-in-law I had scarcely considered so generous.

*Bab.* I understand you not.

*Major.* I observe already, you deny it out of delicacy.

*Bab.* No, indeed——

*Major.* Very well, to-morrow more of it. Now I will go to sleep. I am glad, that the waggish fellow has not come in my way again this evening ; I would have drubbed him.

*Bab.* Ah, dear father, with the exception of his waggishness, he is the best man in the world.

*Major.* I doubt it. The trick, which he played me to-day——

*Bab.* A youthful trick, such as he indeed plays every day, but for which he every day makes amends by generous actions.

*Major.* Well, I hope so !

*Bab.* He is the benefactor of the whole village ; even I owe to him my few happy hours. In confidence, dear father, I believe, he loves me, and I—am well disposed towards him.

*Major.* Indeed ?

*Bab.* He seems desirous, to possess me, and I—should be very happy with him.

*Major.* With that blustering fellow ?

*Bab.* O I know his heart.

*Major.* Well, I will also learn to know it. But for to-day I desire nothing further, than an acquaintance with my bed. Sleep well, my child. (*he kisses her upon the forehead.*) I feel, that I shall have a gentle night's rest. (*goes into his chamber.*)

*Bab.* (*whilst she extinguishes the lights in the room.*) Sleep I hardly shall—but sweet waking dreams will hover around me.—Fritz ! Fritz ! I must not let you observe, how much I love you. (*goes into her chamber.*)

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## SCENE. VII.

FRITZ *alone.*

[*He puts forth only his head from under the table covering.*]

Do you indeed love me ? Well, then I will become a orderly man, or the deuce shall take me !—I will play more waggish tricks, or at most only one in eight days.—Hark ! it is striking twelve. (*a clock is heard to strike.*) The hour of ghosts.—Good, that Babet has left no light burning ; the moonshine makes the thing still more fearful.—Methinks, I already hear a pair of slippers moving. (*he draws himself somewhat back.*)

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## SCENE VIII.

MRS. V. LANGSALM. DORIS. FRITZ.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*wrapt in a long powder-cloak with sleeves, yet so, that the sleeves hang down loose ; upon the head, a high and broad old fashioned cap, with a veil.*)

*Dor.* (*steps, facing her, from her chamber, muffled in a sheet.*)

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*in a low voice, stepping out.*) He is not here yet.

*Dor.* (*in the same manner.*) An uncomfortable promenade. What must not one do to get a rich husband. (*Both come pretty near each other by degrees, suddenly they see each other, and scream very loudly. Doris drops her sheet ; Mrs. V. Langsalm throws the powder-cloak and cap from her ; both fly into their respective rooms.*)

*Fritz.* (*has half crept from under the table, sticks kneeling both arms in his sides, and laughs, until he can laugh no longer. At last he stands up and comes forth.*) Aha ! my handsome dames ! you will perform no ghost-play again, how ?—the field of battle is covered with baggage. I have conquered the sheet of my chaste cousin—and the powder-cloak of my aunt—and a cap of the year 50.—But the joke is only half completed. They have both run away. Whom must the chivalrous Selicour now carry off ?—I have pledged my word, to procure him a Dulcinea—how must I accomplish it ?

## SCENE IX.

MR. V. LANGSALM, *in comic nightdress with a lamp,*  
comes out of his chamber. FRITZ.

*Langs.* What horrid spectacle is there then here? can one not even at night enjoy sweet rest?

*Fritz.* (*aside.*) You come just at the right time.

*Langs.* Cousin, what are you doing here so late?

*Fritz.* Ah dear uncle! I have discovered a black conspiracy.

*Langs.* Black or white, they should let me sleep! do you hear? let me sleep.

*Fritz.* Even when you are running the hazard, of losing your most costly jewel?

*Langs.* My most costly jewel is my repose.

*Fritz.* But my aunt? your beloved wife?

*Langs.* Yes, she is also a jewel. Has she been seized with apoplexy?

*Fritz.* Far worse.

*Langs.* Is she dead? well, may God take her into his kingdom of joy.

*Fritz.* Worse than dead, they are about to carry her off.

*Langs.* Carry her off? Well cousin, of this you shall tell me to-morrow. (*is about to go.*)

*Fritz.* But to-morrow it will be too late.

*Langs.* Believe me, cousin, whoever carries her off, will not keep her long.

*Fritz.* To be sure. My aunt is a woman of manly spirit she will help herself through it.

*Langs.* Yes, yes, she will help herself through it, therefore good night.

*Fritz.* But what will she say, when she learns, that her husband has not contributed in the least to her safety?

*Langs.* Yes, then she will indeed grumble.

*Fritz.* Ah, if it ended with the grumbling. But I fear, she will not permit you to close an eye for four weeks.

*Langs.* What do you say? that would be the death of me!

*Fritz.* On the other hand, if you devoted an hour with the tenderest anxiety—

*Langs.* Yes, you are right, I will be tender.

*Fritz.* Then you could afterwards reckon for a long time upon undisturbed repose.

*Langs.* Could I? well, I will do something. Only tell me first, who then is carrying her off?

*Fritz.* Selicour, the traitor! who has so shamefully violated the laws of hospitality.

*Langs.* Selicour? how taste differs in the world? Are they already gone?

*Fritz.* Not yet, but they are about to go. He is in her bedchamber.

*Langs.* This I must not suffer. I will go in.

*Fritz.* Be cautious, he has six strong fellows with him, horrid bandits.

*Langs.* I will call my people.

*Fritz.* The wretch has made all of them drunk, they cannot be roused. Did you not hear, how my aunt screamed?

*Langs.* Yes yes, she screamed with a very shrill voice.

*Fritz.* Now she is silent. Probably they have gagged her.

*Langs.* Gagged her? so that she cannot speak? poor woman, that will be very irksome to her.

*Fritz.* Only endeavour quickly to prevent her really being carried off.

*Langs.* Yes, what can I do?

*Fritz.* By force indeed nothing is to be done. But I know one way. Selicour's carriage stands before the garden door; go down quickly and place yourself in the carriage. Then when the robber comes with his booty, and suddenly perceives the offended husband, he will become dumb with shame and fright.

*Langs.* Will he? is that certain?

*Fritz.* Quite certain. My aunt will have to thank you alone for her safety, and in future will entertain the greatest care for your repose.

*Langs.* Shall I then have to drive no more fowls out of the garden?

*Fritz.* All the fowls will be killed to-morrow, in order to celebrate by a feast the happy preservation.

*Langs.* Also the Turkey-cock?

*Fritz.* That also.

*Langs.* Ah! if I knew that!

*Fritz.* Only be quick! away!

*Langs.* But the night is cold—I am thinly clad, I shall catch cold.

*Fritz.* Wait. Here are some things, which we can use. There, first a powder-cloak. Fine linen protects from the air. (*he puts the powder-cloak upon him.*)

*Langs.* But my head.

*Fritz.* Here is a cap with a veil. The veil is excellent for the mist. (*he places it upon him.*) Now will I myself

accompany you, and not leave you, until I have myself helped you into the carriage. (*he leads him away.*)

*Langs.* Good cousin! but they must come soon, else I shall fall asleep in the carriage.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

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A C T V.

(*Morning.*)

SCENE I.

*FRITZ steals in.*

No one here yet?—I am curious to see, what effect the adventures of the past night will produce—My free-thinking cousin, who believes in no ghosts, screamed however tolerably well. Probably she is still sleeping, and I could perhaps speak with Babet; for she always sings her morning hymn very early. (*he listens at Babet's door.*) I thought so! with the nightingale for a wager.—If one was but allowed to enter.—O woe! I hear the morning cough of my gracious aunt.

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SCENE II.

MRS. V. LANGSALM. FRITZ.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*steps timidly out of her chamber.*) Ah, cousin! are you here? of this I am very glad!

*Fritz.* Good morning, gracious aunt, you do not appear to have slept well?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*very dejectedly.*) I have not closed an eye.

*Fritz.* It has happened just the same to me.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* How so? why?

*Fritz.* Our ancestress is, to mention her with respect, a liar.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*looks anxiously around her.*) Fritz! Fritz! sin not against her!

*Fritz.* She has not appeared.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Ah yes! she has appeared!

*Fritz.* I have watched for her in vain.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Had you been here in the parlour at midnight——

*Fritz.* I came a little too late.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Ah, cousin! I have seen her!

*Fritz.* You?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* My last hour draws near——

*Fritz.* Whence this pusillanimity?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* It is an old saying in our family: that he, to whom the white lady appears, dies within seven weeks afterwards.

*Fritz.* Nonsense, dear aunt——

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Be silent! I am quite contrite. I have deserved this punishment on account of my good ass of my husband!—and also on your account, dear cousin!

*Fritz.* On my account?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Yes, I will lighten my conscience before death overtakes me. The will of your father was obtained unfairly by me.

*Fritz.* Ay!

*Mrs. V. Langs.* I persuaded him to subscribe it, when at the point of death, and when he no longer knew what he did.

*Fritz.* Charming!

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Here it is. Tear it, burn it, you are of age to-day; forsake my Doris, only forgive me! in order that I may die in peace!

*Fritz.* Excellent! This time has my waggishness done me noble services.—(*solemnly.*) Well, gracious Aunt! die by all means! I forgive you.—Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! (*He runs away with the will.*)

*Mrs. V. Langs.* He laughs?—his waggishness has done him noble services?—What does he mean by that?

### SCENE III.

DORIS and MRS. V. LANGSALM.

*Dor.* (*steps likewise timidly out of her chamber, and speaks very dejectedly.*) Good morning *chère Maman*. You look indeed very pale?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* And you the same.

*Dor.* Ah! I have had a horrible apparition!

*Mrs. V. Langs.* You too? is it possible?

*Dor.* Cousin Hurlebusch persuaded me yesterday evening, to suffer myself to be carried off by him, in order to give to our union a touch of the romantic.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Go on.

*Dor.* I was to steal out of my chamber dressed as a ghost.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* As a ghost?!

*Dor.* Since I knew your wish, and as I was desirous of putting an end to the affair, I consented to the mummary—

*Mrs. V. Langs.* You?—was it you?—!

*Dor.* Ah, it cost me dear! for hardly had I stepped out of my chamber, when a real hideous ghost stood before me!

*Mrs. V. Langs.* How did it look?

*Dor.* Blearing eyes—horns and claws—an ugly old woman—

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*sensitively.*) Fear has blinded you.

*Dor.* It appeared to come from your bedroom.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Quite right. O accursed! now I perceive. And what did you do at its appearance?

*Dor.* I screamed and ran away.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* And the ghost?

*Dor.* It screamed just as bad as I did, and remained, I know not where.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Ah my daughter! we have both been deceived in the most wicked manner!

*Dor.* How so?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* I was the ghost.

*Dor.* You?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Our mischievous cousin misled me also in a crafty manner to this masquerade. And now like a fool in my first fright I have confessed to him every thing, and given him back the will.—O you rogue! you rascal!—where is my husband, that I may find at least one object, upon which I vent my rage.

*Dor.* *Chère Maman*, if the matter is so, we shall do best to put a good face upon it, otherwise we shall be laughed at into the bargain.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* I am choking with vexation!

*Dor.* Silence! I hear some one coming. Keep your countenance.

## SCENE IV.

THE MAJOR. THE FORMER.

*Major.* Good morning, children. That I call sleeping.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Have you, brother, not been disturbed?

*Major.* By what?

*Dor.* There have been here in the parlour all sorts of noises.

*Major.* O, after a ride of forty leagues a cannon may be discharged before my bed, without my hearing it.

## SCENE V.

FRITZ. THE FORMER.

*Fritz.* Dear uncle! I kiss your hand.

*Major.* Good morning, you blustering fellow.

*Fritz.* Have you slept out your time?

*Major.* Perfectly.

*Fritz.* Are you in good humour?

*Major.* In the best in the world, else I should have to speak a serious word about your pranks of yesterday.

*Fritz.* Another time, dear uncle. For the present we will forget that, for I need your favour, your forbearance, your love——

*Major.* You are very hasty——

*Fritz.* Give me your Babet for a wife!

*Major.* Hoho! not quite so fast.

*Fritz.* I am of age to-day.

*Major.* Nevertheless, the will of your father——

*Fritz.* My gracious aunt herself has relieved me from that.

*Major.* Indeed ?

*Fritz.* Speak dear aunt ! Repeat, what a few minutes ago, your generous heart so kindly assured me of.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*with stifled rage.*) Yes, brother—since I have observed—that the young man cherishes an invincible inclination towards your daughter—

*Dor.* (*in the same manner.*) And that *I* cannot endure him—

*Major.* Well, if this is the case. But, sir ! do you deserve the excellent girl ?

*Fritz.* Not yet ! but I shall do so—certainly, I shall—

*Major.* The angelic child has sent me during these three years so much money—

*Mrs. V. Langs.* She has sent you money ?

*Major.* Probably, sister, your noble generosity has placed her in the condition, to support her poor father.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* By no means, brother. And if you have really received money from her—

*Major.* Really. Much money.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Well—I am sorry, to be obliged to say—that it is impossible she could have obtained it in an honest manner.

*Major.* What ? Will you make a thief of my child ?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* I do not say that, but from *me* she has not received a farthing.

*Major.* Where is the maiden ?

*Fritz.* Do not put yourself in a passion. I am perhaps able, to solve the riddle, whilst I disclose a little innocent secret.—stay, we are interrupted. Only a moment's patience.

## SCENE VI.

, THE WATCHMAN. THE FORMER.

*Watchman.* By your leave. I am the watchman, and come, to announce, what happened last night at twelve o'clock.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* How? and does even the watchman know already—?

*Watch.* Before the back garden-door stood a travelling carriage. A hundred steps off a gentleman on horseback. Scarcely had I proclaimed the hour of twelve, when a lady was placed in the carriage; the gentleman on horseback whistled, the coachman drove rapidly off, the lady called out powerfully; no peasant in the village could have called out more powerfully.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* What does this mean? an elopement?

*Major.* Who has eloped?

*Watch.* Well now, those who stand here, have not eloped; it must then indeed be some one who does not stand here.

*Major.* For Heaven's sake! Babet!

*Fritz.* Be calm.

*Watch.* I immediately aroused the neighbours. Four young fellows threw themselves instantly upon their horses and galloped after them. The carriage had some start, but they are just now bringing it back.

*Mrs. V. Langs., Doris, and the Major.* Who is it? who?

*Watch.* They have also caught the brisk horseman. It is the young gentleman from the city.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Selicour?

*Dor.* The villain!

*Maj.* And the lady ?

*Watch.* She is supposed to have afterwards become quite composed. She fell asleep.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Who can it be but Babet ?

*Dor.* But still methinks, I heard her singing this morning in her chamber.

*Maj.* It is not Babet.

*Fritz.* No, it is not Babet.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Well, then it is our old housekeeper, Mrs. Krick.

*Watch.* There they bring the young gentleman. [*Exit.*]

## SCENE VII.

*SELICOUR surrounded by peasants, who are armed with cudgels. THE FORMER.*

*Dor.* (*mockingly.*) Welcome, Mr. Von Selicour.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Do you still dare, to shew yourself here ?

*Sel.* I cannot help myself, the cursed fellows drag me hither by force.

*Maj.* You seem to me a fine blade.

*Fritz.* Fye, sir, to let yourself be caught.

*Sel.* Had the posthorses only been better.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* We shall however at length learn from you, whom you have really carried off ?

*Sel.* Why not ? Miss Babet.

*All.* (*except Fritz.*) Babet ?

*Maj.* My daughter ? Sir ! I will break your neck !

*Sel.* Gently sir ! is the young lady your daughter ? It is all the same, it happened with her consent.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Is it possible ? !

*Dor.* Ha ! ha ! ha ! the modest maiden !

*Major.* It is not true.

*Fritz.* No, it is not true.

*Sel.* (to *Fritz*.) How ? You too ? Did you not bring me a letter from her yourself ?

*Major.* A letter ? Give me the letter.

*Sel.* Here it is.

*Major.* Deceit ! This is not my daughter's handwriting.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (looks at it.) Indeed, indeed, it is your daughter's handwriting.

*Dor.* Her handwriting it certainly is.

*Fritz.* Yes, it is hers.

*Major.* It is not hers. (He draws forth his pocket-book.) Here I have a whole packet of letters from her. (He shows them.)

*Mrs. V. Langs.* This is my nephew's handwriting.

*Major.* What ? Yours ?

*Fritz.* Yes, dear uncle.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* and *Doris.* Ha ! Ha ! Ha ! Ha !

*Major.* How am I to understand this ?

*Fritz.* The matter is easily unravelled. Cousin Babet always gave me empty letters to forward. I knew, that my dear uncle wanted money ; I transcribed the letters, added a postscript, placed money in and despatched them.

*Major.* I am petrified.

*Sel.* (triumphantly.) Then this letter is still from Babet ?

*Fritz.* Certainly, but to her father. She gave it me this morning.

*Sel.* And you have dared to make sport with me ?

*Fritz.* If you will most kindly give me leave, yes.

*Sel.* Nonsense! you shall not deceive me. Babet still remains in the carriage, and the strongest proof, that she accompanied me voluntarily, is her composure, for she has slept soundly the whole time.

*Fritz.* Then, let them fetch her here.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (*to the peasants.*) Go, bring the lady here. (*Exeunt peasants.*)

*Sel.* I tell you, it is Babet.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* I will stake my life, he is right.

*Dor.* Who else can it be?

*Major.* I am quite stupified.

*Fritz.* Only a little patience.

## SCENE. VIII.

*BABET from her chamber. THE FORMER.*

*Bab.* I hear so much noise here—

*Major, Mrs. V. Langsalm, Doris, and Selicour.* Babet!

*Fritz.* Well, there she really is!

*Bab.* Why does my coming excite such a general astonishment?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Were you not sitting in the carriage?

*Dor.* Did he not run away with you?

*Sel.* Have you not been asleep?

*Major.* Did you not write these letters?

*Bab.* For heaven's sake! what does this mean?

*Fritz.* Only be quiet, I hear already the developement upon the staircase.

## SCENE IX.

MR. V. LANGSALM. THE FORMER.

*Langs.* (accompanied by some peasants, still has on the powder-cloak, and the cap with the veil upon his head.—*The peasants withdraw.*)

*Fritz.* There comes the carried-off beauty.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Is that her?

*Major.* Her figure promises little.

*Dor.* Probably our dairy-maid.

*Sel.* Am I bewitched?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* (to herself.) Do I see rightly? is not that my cap?

*Major.* May we beg permission, fair lady, to raise your veil?

*Dor.* Which so enviously conceals your charms.

*Sel.* Who are you, madam?

*Fritz.* Or Mademoiselle.

*Major.* The poor person cannot yet recover her breath.

[*During this dialogue Langsalm has by degrees been pushed quite in front of the stage.*]

*Dor.* Or perhaps she is gagged. But I can no longer withstand the desire, to admire the taste of Mr. Von Selicour. (she beats back the veil and exclaims with astonishment) Papa!

*Mrs. V. Langs., the Major, Babet, Selicour.* (at the same time) My husband? My brother! My uncle! Mr. Von Langsalm!

*Fritz.* (Pulls Babet stealthily by her dress, and says, whilst he rubs his hands merrily.) This is a little trick of my invention.

*Bab.* Rogue !

*Langs.* (*looks around him imploringly.*)

*Mrs. V. Langs.* But for heaven's sake ! Mr. Timotheus Sebastian Von Langsalm——

*Major.* Brother !

*Dor.* Yet explain to me, papa——

*Langs.* (*whilst he throws aside the mummerly.*) Children—  
This I never could have believed, that I was to be carried off in my old age.

*Major.* But how did it happen ?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* That he does not know himself.

*Langs.* But too well. In order to save *you*, my treasure.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Me ?

*Langs.* Out of pure tenderness for you.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Was *I* then to have been carried off ?

*Langs.* Certainly, only ask our cousin.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Is this Beelzebub of a cousin concerned in this too ?

*Langs.* This time he is innocent ; I heard you scream myself.

*Mrs. V. Langs.* What does that matter to you ?

*Langs.* Yes indeed, that matters nothing at all to me.

*Major.* Did you then really scream, sister ?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* It was Doris.

*Dor.* Pardon me, mamma, you screamed much louder than I did.

*Major.* At what then ?

*Mrs. V. Langs.* Misery and woe have I invoked upon this arrant knave, (*pointing to Fritz,*) who was born for my torment, and whom I will not bear a day longer in my house. Do you hear, cousin ? Take your money, marry *Babet*, but come not again into my presence. [*Exit.*]

*Fritz.* I take my money, I marry Babet, (*he takes her under his arm.*) and go my way. (*he draws her after him.*)

*Bab.* (*struggling.*) Cousin, are you mad?

*Fritz.* Why this struggling? You are my intended bride. Papa has given his consent. This evening our wedding shall take place. Now must the parson be sent for. Away! away! (*he draws her after him with gentle force.*)

*Major.* I must see, where they are, else the rogue will carry her off in earnest. [*Exit.*]

*Dor.* Mr. Von Selicour, after all that has happened you will feel, that there is not a single person in the whole house, to whom the continuance of your visit can be agreeable. (*goes into her chamber.*)

*Sel.* Mr. Von Langsalm, you must fight with me.

*Langs.* I?

*Sel.* The affront, which has been put upon me in your house, can only be washed out by blood.

*Langs.* I do not fight, but if you have so great a desire, my brother will fight with you a dozen times before breakfast. I will immediately send for him.

*Sel.* Do not trouble yourself. Urgent affairs call me to the city. But as soon as these are finished, tremble for my vengeance. [*Exit.*]

*Langs.* (*alone.*) First he carries me off over stick and stone, and then he wishes to shoot me dead.—Are they at length all gone?—Heaven be praised!—(*he sits down in the middle of the stage.*) Ladies and gentlemen, good night! (*he goes to sleep.*)

THE CURTAIN DROPS.

*Finis.*

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**J. HALL, PRINTER.**

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